

Nietzsche and the Great War

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IS IMMORTALITY PLAUSIBLE?

Widely divergent views are entertained regarding the meaning and usefulness of the term immortality. For the purposes of this article we shall concern ourselves with its more common significance of personal survival beyond the existence of mind in its corporeal setting. As to the usefulness of such a concept, we propose to restrict our inquiry to its scientific status. We shall not, then, encroach upon the domain of religion, although it is as a religious concept that immortality is undoubtedly best known and most widely believed. Neither shall we concern ourselves with the moral aspects of the problem, although the best case for the persistence of spiritual life and the integrity of the soul is perhaps that which rests its claims upon the principle of fulfilment. Kant's famous argument from the categorical imperative of the moral law is too well known to demand a repetition in this connection, and its implications are not directly germane to our topic. The question as to the desirability of immortality, which likewise involves the consideration of moral values, is also beside our issue.

With the metaphysics of the problem we cannot so readily dispense. Yet we shall make no attempt to evaluate the concept with reference to the chief systems of philosophy. Our point of view is rather that of the more or less critical realism which modern science is wont to support. Accordingly, our metaphysical implications may be restricted to those that modern science finds of pragmatic value in the construction of laws and principles to explain the sequence of events in a universe of space and time.

With such reservations the question becomes: Under what conditions can personal immortality be accepted as a scientific fact?

There are two ways of establishing such a fact: (1) By demonstrable proof of the existence of 'souls' independent of the body; and, (2) By the acceptance of immortality as a necessary postulate for the complete explanation of mental phenomena and activities as we know them in their bodily setting. The first way is evidently deductive, while the second is inductive.

Regarding the first we shall have but little to say. It is, of course, well known that numerous investigations have been made of recent years in the realm of spiritism. Many distinguished scientists have interested themselves in such experiments, and in several notable instances investigators have satisfied themselves that personal immortality is a fact. Yet the scientific status of spiritism is still highly suspect, and we have no additional data to offer here by means of which we can hope to convince the skeptical that the existence of disembodied intelligences is demonstrable.

Our attention is therefore directed to the second question, dealing with immortality as a scientific postulate for the more complete explanation of mental contents and processes as we know them through the investigations of scientific psychology.

But first, let us be clear as to the meaning of spiritism and telepathy, for if immortality is found to be rationally plausible, the doctrines of spiritism and telepathy may be useful to us, even though we continue to regard them as inconclusive.

Of the two concepts, spiritism is the larger, for it naturally involves telepathy. By telepathy we understand the possibility of communication between mind and mind otherwise than by means of the senses. Spiritism provides such a communication when the source of information is a disembodied intelligence.

Demonstrations of telepathy have been frequently reported, yet little is known of conditions under which such communications take place, for they have not been reduced to a definite technique, and we cannot repeat the experiments under normal control. Hence the positive results thus far achieved are but isolated instances bearing the characteristics of chance phenomena, rather than those of prearranged and definitely controlled facts. Although recognition is freely accorded the investigators of this murky region for their patience and goodwill in devoting time and thought to so refractory a material, let us not be deceived into supposing

that the scientific status of telepathy has yet been proven. With minds open to receive any facts which may result from their investigations, our problem as to the validity of immortality as a scientific concept must not be prejudiced by the quasi-acceptance of so dubious a phenomenon as telepathy.

If telepathy be still dubious, spiritistic communication is even more so. Not only does it presuppose telepathy, but the evidence must be clear that the message or other phenomena in question could not have been occasioned by known physical causes. Accordingly, the most sympathetic of critics can scarcely do more than suspend judgment until further proof has been adduced.

The notion of spiritual immortality as an explanatory principle is very ancient in the mind of man. Animism is perhaps the earliest theory of existence of which we have record. It is not surprising, then, that so natural a belief as that of an independent 'soul' should persist in the mind of common man. Yet the assumption of animism acquires no special merit in the eyes of science by virtue either of its age or of its 'naturalness'. Rather the contrary, one might say, for the whole history of science teaches the fallacy of accepting the obvious as the true and real. Still, we must be equally on our guard against a tendency to neglect a doctrine merely because it was favored at a stage of less exact reasoning and of more limited knowledge.

There can be little doubt that the skeptical attitude of modern science towards all things that appear to have about them a tinge of the occult and the mystical, is chiefly attributable to the sublime faith imposed in the theory of mechanics. It was in the realm of the physical that the first great scientific achievements were founded, and our exact knowledge is still largely confined to this sphere. Yet the principles of mechanical action, important and satisfactory though they be in dealing with inanimate matter, are not exclusively worthy of consideration when we approach the problems of life and mind.

Life and mind involve a conception of growth and development that is without an adequate parallel in the domain of inanimate nature, and until the epoch-making theory of Darwin became current, the science of organism was treated in a stepfatherly

fashion. The principle of evolution introduced a means of understanding biological facts which hitherto had been quite inexplicable. Yet the doctrine of natural selection affords but an incomplete explanation of organic growth and development. In order that natural selection may be operative, there must be variations in the structure and function of organisms, and those variations that are conducive to survival must 'breed true' in the offspring. The question is then pertinent: Whence these variations in a strictly mechanical universe, and why should they persist in the offspring? Much ingenious thought has been devoted to a solution to this problem, yet it can hardly be said that evolution has been satisfactorily established on a purely mechanical basis.

Many argue that the concept of life itself involves a non-mechanical element, and speculation is readily provoked concerning the possibility of a spiritual essence coextensive with all the phenomena of life. But since our chief concern is with the survival of such an essence apart from its physiological accompaniments, we may be content to mention such a possibility, and pass on to a consideration of the spiritual implications of the human mind.

When we turn to the study of mind we meet with great difficulty in reducing its phenomena to a mechanistic basis. Admitting the mechanical nature of all *expressive* behavior, we are still left with the problem of consciousness, and its directive guidance of the machine at its command. It is, of course, true that many psychologists hesitate to accept as a reality the apparent guidance of the body by the mind. They prefer to regard the scientific basis of control as residing strictly in the nervous discharge, which, indeed, must obey the same laws of energy as those that are assumed to be the all-sufficient cause of action in the physical world. Mind is then but an accompanying phenomenon,—an aspect, as it were, of the physical event: in its own right it has, and can have, no causal efficiency.

We shall not attempt to deal with the various theories as to the relationship existing between body and mind. It is enough to point out that all explanations which make mind wholly dependent upon body are unsatisfactory, because of their inability

to account for the *meaning* of experience. Why should consciousness appear in a world of sheer mechanical forces? This question materialism has always failed to answer.

The study of mind, its contents and activities, reveals many things so definitely determined by bodily conditions that we cannot doubt their dependent nature. When we sense, there must be physical stimuli to provoke physical responses in mechanically preadjusted sense-organs. When we act, there must be muscular coordinations occasioned by suitable nervous discharges. Even when we imagine, it appears probable that we do so by virtue of the 'plasticity' and 'elasticity' of certain nervous structures. Our doctrine of associative recall is firmly based upon a physical foundation. Only when we *think*, is there an added element which seems to be refractory to the mechanical interplay of forces, although the adequacy of a strictly mechanical pattern of energies to account for the finer emotional nuances attending our appreciative moments is also questionable.

In the case of thought, where our knowledge is fairly explicit, the very concept of meaning—the apprehension and establishment of relations—is a thing quite apart from the aggregate of conscious contents which a mechanical sequence of events might be expected to afford. In thought we transcend the actually present contents of sensation and image. We select and reject, often with slight reference to the data that sensation presents and that association can recall. Within the system of the mechanically determined, there operates the purposive direction of the *will*, using as best it may the presentations of sensation and associative recall, together with the capacities and abilities of behavior. Very often, to be sure, it is of little avail to stem the tide of inherited desire and habitual performance. We must, therefore, admit that most of our ideas are ours only in the sense that we *have* them, and not in the sense that we *made* them. Yet ideas must be made at some time, by someone, and all behavior is not of the reflex order.

It is just these rarer moments of self-confident, personally directed thought and action that introduce the creative aspect of intelligence. It is just these moments that exalt the mind of man above the commonplace performances of imitation, for in these

creative moments meaning finds its birth, and herein lies our chief evidence of 'soul'.

The commonly accepted view of the physical correlate of thought is based upon a conception of 'pathways' in the nervous system. We know that our nervous structures afford a bewildering mass of thread-like interconnections mediating between the sense-organs, on the one hand, and the muscular and glandular structures, on the other. At first it would seem easy to suppose that by means of the hereditary and acquired connections which are made in this complicated network of strands, we are enabled to perform all the functions of life and mind. With the added concepts of 'plasticity' and 'elasticity', we can venture to account for the revivals of memory and the ability to act in accord with the dictations of past experience. The theory assumes for a certain idea a definite pattern of nervous pathways in the brain, the revival of the idea being conditioned by a nervous discharge which retraces the pathways constituting a pattern laid down in the original sensory experience.

But the evidence in favor of this obvious assumption is not of the best. In cases where permanent injury to the brain has interfered for a time with its normal mode of functioning, it has sometimes been found possible to educate other brain-parts to perform the functions of those that were destroyed. There is a tendency now observable among neurologists, therefore, to relinquish the 'pathway' theory in favor of a somewhat subtler conception of patterns that inhere in certain stresses and strains of the nervous energy itself. In accordance with this notion the physical basis of the idea may be sought in a pattern of energies which could, hypothetically, occur at diverse regions of the brain, or, indeed, at any spatial point, provided only that the same corpuscular and dynamic pattern should be duplicated.

But what can occasion the formation and duplication of such a pattern? If it be only the result of a chance collocation of physical units, there is small likelihood of its repetition. When we relinquish the notion of pre-formed pathways in the nervous structure as providing for the integrity of the idea, we seem forced to admit that purposive guidance of an extra-physical sort is responsible for this integrity. Now, supposing the idea to be contin-

gent upon a corpuscular dynamic pattern whose integrity requires directive guidance, we have here a buttress upon which to lean in defending the plausibility of personal immortality. From this point of vantage we may make bold to present the claims of immortality as a possible scientific concept. Not, to be sure, that we can hope as yet to make it clear that such a contention must be found acceptable; nor that with its acceptance immortality emerges with all the assurance of a scientific fact. It is with possibilities rather than with actualities that we are dealing, and in the remainder of this paper we shall but suggest a few of the consequences of such an hypothesis.

In advancing the theory of energetic patterns which may be duplicated in different regions of the brain and yet furnish a physical correlate for the same idea, we of course do not intend that the connection of these patterns with the known pathways which connect the sense-organs with the muscles and glands is to be left out of consideration. Within the living body, as already pointed out, much of what we are conscious is definitely conditioned by present environment and the hereditary and acquired capacities and abilities of the organism. But if our ideas are, in part at least, independent of the gross nervous structure, their physical integrity being attributed to dynamic patterns of stresses and strains, it is conceivable that a pattern of this order should be defined in the ether as well as by aid of the cruder material of nervous matter. If, furthermore, the occasion for such an integration of corpuscular forces is sought in the purposive direction of a spiritual rather than of a physical intent, we have before us grounds for understanding how personality may continue after bodily death.

Such patterns of energy in their most elemental form, held together and directed by a purpose which is psychic in nature, need not suffer complete dispersion with the event of bodily death, yet they might well suffer a shock. The continuance of mind after such bodily death would only involve the transference of its processes from the cruder medium of the brain to the freer, tinier medium of ethereal space.

That the shock of death might be a sufficient cause for the complete disruption of such a subtle interrelation of energetic

stresses and strains is, to be sure, an obstacle not readily set aside. Yet we have no evidence that the shock is so great as is commonly supposed. Recent studies indicate that bodily death is not a sudden cessation of all vital functioning. Instead, it is found to be a piecemeal occurrence,—a gradual and varying decline in the functioning of different organs until, at length, the entire mass is inert. As for lapses in consciousness, these are frequently evident in life, the typical one being, of course, sleep. Yet after sleep we regain the same personal direction which we possessed before the lapse occurred, and the analogy of sleep and death need not be lightly dismissed because the poet says:—

“Every morning we are born ; every night we die.”

A word or two may be appropriate here as suggestive of the kind of consciousness that a disembodied intelligence might be expected to enjoy. It seems evident that this could not be of a sensory order, for the energetic patterns which we are assuming as the basis for the integrity of ideas extend in a bodily setting neither to the sense-organs nor to the muscles. No amount of education will restore to our use a muscle from which the nervous connections have been severed, nor will it bring back sight or hearing when the relevant organs have been cut off from the brain. The discarnate mind, however, may preserve in some measure its capacity for imagination and affection. Of greater importance is the significance of these hypothetical patterns of energy for thought and meaning, for the phases of mental life which we regard as highest and most important are precisely those most readily conceived as surviving bodily death. The life of a disembodied spirit would thus be a life of intelligence, and, we may also hope, of appreciation. It would have no perceptions, but instead would communicate telepathically by a species of reflection with other minds to which it should find itself in some way attuned.

But since in its very essence mind is purposively directed, we need have no fears lest it lead a passive and uneventful existence. As we can know so little of the changed conditions under which a discarnate intelligence must act, it is perhaps, idle to speculate

at greater length upon the pure life of the 'soul'. Yet if we regard rational and appreciative ability as constituting the finest flower of mental life, there can be no doubt that a transmundane existence would afford ample opportunity for a progressive evolution of the truest worth.

In sketching our theory we have held, with what may seem a needless tenacity, to the doctrine of a necessary physical correlate for mind. Having once assumed a spiritual capacity of directive guidance which transcends the physical course of bodily energy, are we not justified in taking the further step of positing independent mental contents? If behavior is directed by the 'soul', may not this spiritual direction be productive of the conscious data themselves which we call ideas and thoughts? Although many accept the view that mental activity is non-mechanical in its essential directive capacity, there is no evidence that this direction is a thing apart from the world of physical events. As a force or energy it is conceivable only in terms of other forces and energies. Solely in its directive or purposive character does it show unique features which seem to require that it be placed upon a different plane within the realm of natural consequences. Its conscious products are, indeed, in a class distinct from the particles of matter which make up the content of the physical universe, but since we find it operating only in the closest connection with material elements, we are hardly justified in assuming that we may act without such a foundation.

The attempt here made is to show the possibility of carrying over a material correlate necessary to the production of thoughts and ideas, into a state whose organic basis of protoplasm is no longer present. If these dynamic patterns among the finest particles of matter shall survive bodily death, then some directive control must be exerted to hold them together. If the patterns depend upon other bodily connections, then we should expect them to be dissipated upon the death of the body; but if their essential integrity in organic life is attributable to a direction or guidance which may not be explained in terms of molar mechanics, why should they not be continued and sustained in an ethereal environment? Indeed, the formal relations themselves which determine these patterns of thought and which we ascribe

to intelligent direction, may even find a place within the higher physics of corpuscular mechanics.

The survival of personality after bodily death is no absurdity, however doubtful it may seem, and the continuance of intelligence in a matrix of ethereal vibrations is at least a fascinating notion. But the continuity of the complicated patterns of thought which constitute individual intelligence must be safeguarded against casual disruptions by rhythms of binding interrelationship whose nature as yet we have no means to explore.

With so little evidence speculation is largely idle, yet inquiries, tentative and incomplete though they be, are helpful in the suggestions they give touching the definition of a problem which has always excited the interest of man, and probably will always continue to do so.

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NIETZSCHE AND THE GREAT WAR

Nietzsche was first artist, then scientist, then prophet. Since it is from the prophetic period that we derive most of his war literature, it is important to take into account his prophetic style and manner of utterance.

Certainly, Nietzsche is a craftsman of the first rank. He manipulates language with a rare virtuosity, and consciously avails himself of all of the means and devices of a brilliant style. He is rich in striking antitheses, in elaborate pictures, in pertinent coinages; as well as in unexpected plays upon words. He understands the art of inducing a cumulative effect even to the point of explosive violence, as well as the art of delicate allusion, of sudden dumbfounding and silence.

These properties of style emerge especially at the time when he began to write in aphorisms, in the compact brevity of which close attention to form is required. Nietzsche understood pre-eminently how to manipulate the rhetorical arts in his aphorisms. But quite apart from this, aphorisms as such are an effective device of style—single thoughts appear much more sharply and appealingly in their abrupt particularity than would be the case if they were soberly placed in their order and sequence, not grounded in the antecedent nor softened by the consequent. Each single thought appears in harsh one-sidedness, as if sprung from nothingness,—and this makes all the stronger impression. Let such short sayings be uttered with prophetic poignancy and dignity, and they force the reflective mind into activity far more effectively than long-winded argumentation could do.

Nietzsche speaks in such short, sharp precepts—like the founder of a religion. They are compressed texts, and everybody finds peculiar charm in making his own gloss for the texts. As I say, the first writings of Nietzsche do not show this form, but *neither do they speak of war*. Only since 1876 did he so write. It is a style in which literary people are inclined to accord him the uncontested palm of mastership.

And now, to this purely historical art and finesse of the aphorist, we must add the art of the lyric poet in Nietzsche. Others

wrote polished aphorisms—La Rochefoucauld and Pascal, Lichtenberg and occasionally even Schopenhauer; but Nietzsche is more—he is a lyricist. This lyrical quality of his style shows itself in the emotions which he supplies, in the flow of passion with which he speaks, in the subjective coloring which everything assumes. An extremely temperamental ego speaks to us in all his utterances. In all those aphorisms we get the inner experience of the author, his personal joy and pain. This lyric element mounts to formally poetic altitudes occasionally;—prose fails him and Nietzsche seizes upon poetic form in the shape of the dithyramb. This is especially true of his *Zarathustra*, the glowing and profound lyric thought of which reminds us of Giordano Bruno and of Hölderlin.

But as we must add to the aphoristic the lyric, so we must add to the lyric the symbolistic. Symbolism especially characterizes Nietzsche's main work, *Zarathustra*. The figure of Zarathustra himself and his story is symbol to Nietzsche, a poetic construction, a parable. In *Zarathustra* Nietzsche materializes himself (to use the language of spiritism) and his ideal: in the fate of Zarathustra we behold the necessary mutations and upheavals of his own nature, the dissonances and their resolutions in his own inner being. But this parable, in the case of Nietzsche, never becomes dry, didactic allegory, but remains living symbol. On the other hand, the parable is never too distinct and obtrusive, but remains always in the *clair-obscur* of the intimated, of the *dawn of day*, and so, of just the symbolic. And the *clair-obscur* of symbol rises occasionally to the heights of enigmatic mysticism, where deeper, more mysterious backgrounds are unveiled behind what is said.

It has been necessary to call attention at some length to this stylistic character of Nietzsche's writings, for if one forgets this style as Nietzsche treats of war, and of woman, and takes his words as prosaic, literal, matter-of-fact, scientific, and not aphoristic, lyric, symbolic, mystic, one will misunderstand many a passage and will fail to gain an insight into his true position on these and other subjects.

Before we go into the question of content, shall it be held that content is rooted in Nietzsche's *personality*? Should the per-

sonal characteristics of the man be disengaged? Perhaps it were better to do so, yet I hesitate, so great is the difference between a character-sketch and real life! In Nietzsche's case it is quite certain that the philosophic impulse is the fountainhead from which his personality is to be understood. The delineation of the personality of Nietzsche, then, is tantamount to the delineation of the philosophic personality of Nietzsche. But the philosophic impulse can be preponderatingly understanding, theoretical thought, or feeling, or will—that is, it can make intellect, feeling or will serviceable, employ either as vehicle in order to live out this impulse in life. And so we have, in the one case, a *scientific* philosopher (Leibnitz, Wundt); in the next case, an *artist*-philosopher (Plato, Schopenhauer); in the third case, the *prophetic* philosopher (Pythagoras, Empedocles). Of course, a *scientific* philosopher investigates, establishes: an *artist*-philosopher feels and forms: the *prophetic* philosopher proclaims and demands and enlists. Now, master-thinkers belong predominantly to one or another of these groups. But of Nietzsche one cannot say this; for, to reiterate, now he is artist, now investigator, and now prophet—frequently all three at once—no one ever exclusively.

This *triplicity* is the most peculiar thing in Nietzsche's philosophic individuality. Perhaps this is the reason why neither as artist, nor as scholar, nor as prophet, Nietzsche quite became a star of the first magnitude. This triplicity in coördination of its factors is the reason again why we cannot describe the theoretical Nietzsche apart from the emotional Nietzsche, or *vice versa*. We must abandon the effort to understand the heart and head of Nietzsche sundered from each other. If now we seek the most important properties in which there is an interplay of the two, we shall find two things, which I choose to call intensity and finesse, or, more simply, *strength and fineness*. Strength and fineness,—these constitute the personality of Nietzsche. I agree with Mügge's striking phrase: "*Nietzsche's intellect was as hard as iron, but his heart was soft as down.*"

Are the war utterances of Nietzsche to be interpreted from the point of view of the hardness of his intellect, or from that of the softness of his heart, or both? It is the union of this

hardness and softness that accounts for the fanaticism of Nietzsche.

We shall have to supply another word, however, as to the relation between life and doctrine, man or personality and work, in the case of Nietzsche. Two erroneous views are current among us. One is the belief that the superman is the enlarged portrait of Nietzsche himself; the other is the belief that the superman is the exact opposite of Nietzsche and that therefore the work has nothing to do with the man. The first view is entirely wrong; we know that the higher type man, which Nietzsche would breed, is the hard, hilarious, pitiless, master-man. But there is little of all this to be traced in the personality of Nietzsche. Nietzsche was himself—his intellect aside—effeminate, tender, devoted, affectionate, sympathetic. He warns his mother, sister, friends, not to read his writings, saying: "Every profound thinker fears more being *understood* than being *misunderstood*." His vanity may suffer from the latter, but from the former suffers his heart, his fellow-feeling, which avers: 'I would not have it as hard with you as with me.' He was grieved that his attack upon Strauss caused the latter sorrow and perhaps death. He showed mildness, tenderest regard for friends, giving or lending money right and left. His eyes looked goodness or melancholy, not the divine wickedness and hilarity which he preached. His moral conduct was *bourgeois*. "Everything illegitimate is offensive to me," he writes.

But some take certain extremes in Nietzsche's doctrines—the glorification of Napoleon, Cesare Borgia, etc.—as self-exaltation. The answer to this is that these types praised by Nietzsche are the exact opposite of himself. But because the opinion of the one is erroneous, that of the other is not on that account correct. The second group recognize the diversity between the norms and the philosopher's own features; but they do not recognize the intimate bond which unites the two. The truth is that the closest connection exists between the pronounced opposites of these two factors. There are two kinds of philosophic personalities to be distinguished here. In one kind the ethical views are the ideals of one's own actions and feelings. The ideal is the Platonic idea of the author—Spinoza, Kant, Fichte!—or else,

the logically developed ideal grows out of one's own being, the dissatisfaction with one's own deeds. Then there arises a dualism, a dividedness—*Zerrissenheit*—in the nature of the preacher of the ideal. The more powerful this nature, all the more glowing is its need of redemption, all the more counter to its own life and being is its ideal;—such is the case with Schopenhauer, Wagner, and Nietzsche. As Nietzsche said: "Our defects are the eyes with which we see the ideal. In both cases the theory of value is intimated, intergrown with the kernel of personality, whether the content of personality be in identity or contrast with that theory of value."

Here, then, is Nietzsche's personality of strength and fineness, of hardness and softness, of delicacy of sentiment and refinement of taste; a personality of storm and calm; a personality of the elegance and good taste and æsthetic qualities of the artist, of the sincerity and truthfulness of the scientist, of the heroism and venturesomeness and tumultuousness of the prophet;—here is this personality revealing itself in every line, in every aphorism. In his own eyes his philosophy was the expression of a personality, of a character, of a temperament.

And surely, we must take this into account, along with his style, when we read what he has to say on war and woman and religion, especially. For example, when Nietzsche cries: "Be hard, O, my brothers, be hard!" what does he mean? "Give your friend a hard bed!" he adjures us. "War and courage have done more great things than love of neighbor has." "Not your sympathy but your bravery rescues the unfortunate."

Nietzsche's head is as hard as iron, like Darwin's; his heart as soft as down, like Schopenhauer's. If the reader relate Nietzsche's hard doctrine to his soft heart, and his tender utterance to his hard head, or make any other adjustment of the matter, he must of course take the consequences in interpretation.

Another question should be raised here, which bears upon our problem along with style and personality, namely,—the antecedents of Nietzsche's hard doctrine. These antecedents begin with the Greek sophists, especially with Kallikles, who in Plato's *Gorgias* developed similar doctrines as to the rights of the stronger. Moral and religious limitations are not "from Nature," but

through precept; laws are made only by the weak, the miserable, the many, for the purpose of their protection against the strong. But Nature wills dominion on the part of the strong. According to Nature it is right that the stronger rule over the weaker and that the mightier have an advantage over the less mighty. The more powerful, the stronger, shall rightly, according to natural law, conquer. This sophistic antimorality thus considers moral laws as unnatural fetters, which the strong snap without hesitation, with a good conscience, in order that they may fulfill the will of Nature.

Other phenomena of antiquity may be recalled,—the Cynics, for example. Some baptize Nietzsche's tendency simply as neocynicism. Or, the skeptics (Anaxarchus, teacher of Pyrrho), who accompanied Alexander the Great on his triumphal exploits, and fortified Alexander later to be a superman and to exercise his right to rise above all restrictions. Or, again, certain phenomena of the Middle Ages may be remembered, especially the Assassins, with whom Nietzsche consciously associated himself. Often Nietzsche adopted their slogan: "Nothing is true, everything is permissible." Again, there were the Renaissance men, among whom Nietzsche sought the exemplar of his superman—Machiavelli, Agrippa von Nettesheim, Montaigne. Many others see in Thomas Hobbes a forerunner of Nietzsche's *Homo homini lupus*.

Still other exemplars may be found among the *illuminati* of the eighteenth century, Mandeville, Marquis de Sade, or even Vauvenargues. Then there is that Frenchman with whom Nietzsche is so often compared—Rousseau, the preacher of a return to nature from the aberrations and the decadence of hyperculture.

In Germany also at that time there was a movement in which one may find parallels to Nietzsche—the period of *Sturm und Drang*—the Genius time with Genius morality, from which the young Goethe did not stand aloof. Reference may be made to a similar phenomenon in the nineteenth century—Romanticism, fastening itself to Fichte's doctrine, finding its typical expression in Schlegel's malodorous novel *Lucinde*.

Finally, Nietzsche is often tied up with Max Stirner, who employed the Hegelian dialectic to ridicule Feuerbach's Humanity

philosophy and to replace the abstraction Humanity with the concrete individual ego—all this in his famous book, *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum*, a book which became the Bible of the so-called "Edel-Anarchisten", with whose leader, Krapotkin, Nietzsche likewise has been associated.

Certainly now, this is a rich and interesting list of forerunners of Nietzsche. In view of such a list we may not dismiss the hardness of Nietzsche, of which his war-doctrine is in part expressive, as the storminess of an unbalanced mind. Nietzsche is rather the representative of a tendency which appears from time to time in the history of culture—usually as extreme reaction against an antecedent, one-sided over-extension of authority on the part of human society; against the exactions of its culture upon the individual; in short, a *reaction of nature against culture*.

Yet Nietzsche is not to be explained by his kinship with his forerunners simply; he is a thoroughly original nature at the same time. It will be remembered that in his own way Nietzsche made a new synthesis of Schopenhauer and Darwin, transcending each and both of them.

It is against a background of this kind and in the light of these considerations that we should read what Nietzsche says about war. A soft heart could not want war for war's sake, for pain's sake, for death's sake, if peace meant decadence. Always Nietzsche was asking: 'What is the cure of decadence? What is an expression and generation of more strength—or what of more weakness?' In such a matter as this, Nietzsche made large ethical use of the Darwinian formula. He points out that among individuals nature tends to kill off the sickly, the less fit, both in body and in mind; nature would preserve the sturdy and robust; these in turn were more likely to beget a race that is physically desirable. What disease and failure did in the life-struggle of individuals, war must do in the conflict of nations. A people, too, might become effete, anæmic, unworthy of its place. It were well for such a people to be dispossessed by a hardier, a more masterful, stock. And to complain of the injustice of such things was to be misled by conventional morality. Would Nietzsche then agree with Bernhardt's notorious aphorism: "The verdict of war is biologically just"? We shall see.

Nietzsche was Darwinian also in his thought of the individual man's career. He conceived the life of man as an heroic battle against all error and illusion. Nature appears to him to be a terrible and often maleficent force. History seems to him "brutal and senseless." The mission of the higher man is to give no quarter to whatever is bad, to dispel all errors, to denounce all false and overrated values, and to show himself pitiless toward all the weaknesses, all the meannesses, all the lying of civilization. "I dream," he writes in *Ideals of the Future* (Section 8) "of an association of men who will be entire and absolute, who will pay no regard to their conduct or discretion, and will call themselves destroyers; they will submit everything to their criticism, and will sacrifice themselves to truth. Whatever is bad and false must be brought into the light of day! We will not construct before the proper time; we do not know whether we can ever build, or whether it would be better never to build at all. There are lazy pessimists, resigned ones—we shall never be of their number."

Nietzsche's ideal man hates and despises the vulgar worldly prosperity aimed at by the average man; and destroys everything that merits destruction, heedless of his own suffering, heedless of the suffering he causes those about him, borne up in his painful journey through life by his resolute will to be true and sincere at all costs.¹

The wise man, according to Nietzsche, does not promise men peace and the quiet enjoyment of the fruits of their toil. Nietzsche exhorts men to war²—he dazzles their eyes with the hope of victory. "You shall seek your enemy," says Zarathustra; "you shall fight your fight, you shall do battle for your thought! And if your thought succumbs, your loyalty must rejoice at its defeat." "You shall love peace as a means to new wars, and the short peace more than the long." "I do not counsel you to work, but to fight. I do not counsel peace, but victory. Let your work be a fight; let your peace be a victory." "A good cause, ye say, sanctifies even war; but I say unto you that a good

¹ *Schopenhauer as Educator* (Sec. 4).

² *Zarathustra: War and Warriors*.

war sanctifies every cause—for your enemies ye must have hateful adversaries, not contemptible adversaries. Ye must be proud of your enemy, then the successes of your enemy will be also your successes."

In Nietzsche's opinion the open war of rival and contrary forces is the most powerful instrument of progress. Such war shows where there is weakness, where there is physical and moral health, where there is disease. War constitutes one of those dangerous 'experiments' undertaken by the wise man to further the progress of life, to test the value of an idea, of a thought, from the point of view of the development of life. Hence war is beneficial, good in itself; and thus Nietzsche predicts without dismay or regret that Europe is not far from entering into a period of great wars when nations will fight with one another for the mastery of the world.

Is Nietzsche then responsible, in his measure, for Prussian militarism, so-called, and the recent great war? Without special pleading, I will present the evidence on both sides, and leave the reader to draw his own conclusions.

First: To Nietzsche the term war did not primarily suggest battlefields, but something quite different. He thought of it in the sense in which it was used by Heraclitus, for whom Nietzsche felt the warmest admiration, and whose philosophy suggested to him so much of his own. As a general rule, when Nietzsche speaks of war, he means the interplay of cosmic forces or the opposition to oppressive conventions, or the struggle with one's own passions and impulses to secure self-mastery.

Second: His war doctrine was evolved after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870. In the very hour of German triumph, he was most scathing in his criticism of the tendencies he observed in the Fatherland. Here I wish to make a number of brief quotations from Nietzsche:—

"Public opinion in Germany seems strictly to forbid any allusion to the evil and dangerous consequences of a war, more particularly when the war in question has been a victorious one. Writers are jubilant in their praise of war, and of the powerful influence war has brought to bear upon morality and culture and art. But of all evil results due

to the last contest with France, the most deplorable is that German culture was also victorious in the struggle. This error is in the highest degree pernicious. French culture remains as heretofore, and we Germans depend upon it as heretofore. Our culture did not even help toward the success of our arms. Severe military discipline, natural bravery and sustaining power, the superior generalship, unity and obedience in the rank and file—in short, factors which have nothing to do with culture, were instrumental in making us conquer an opponent in whom the most essential of these factors were absent."³

So, in the very hour of Germany's greatest triumph, 1871,⁴ Nietzsche dared tell his countrymen that the culture of vanquished France was incomparably superior to theirs. Again and again he denounced German State-idolatry, its militarism, its fanatical patriotism, the Bismarckian worship of success and the arrogant creed of Deutschland: "Deutschland über alles."

Again Nietzsche writes: "But nothing shall stop me from being rude and from telling the Germans one or two unpleasant home truths: who else would do it, if I did not? I refer to their laxity in historical matters." Here in caustic terms he denounces the "political puppets" and "tyrannical politicians" who alter and touch up history so that there is constant danger of murder and war. Then Nietzsche turns to Treitschke and exclaims contemptuously: "There is such a thing as writing history according to the lights of Imperial Germany; there is also anti-Semitic history; there is also history written with an eye to *the Court*, and Herr von Treitschke is not ashamed of himself."

Nietzsche asserts also that readiness for war involves the withdrawal, year after year, of "the ablest, strongest, and most industrious men in extraordinary numbers from their proper occupations and callings to be turned into soldiers."⁵

If a nation would count as a Great Power, as we shall see below, it must "constantly sacrifice a number of its most conspicuous talents upon the 'Altar of the Fatherland'." This meant a "public hecatomb," he said. The individual could no longer live his

³*Thoughts Out of Season*, Vol. I, p. 3 (abridged, but meaning unaltered).

⁴See Nietzsche's *Dawn of Day*, Secs. 189, 190; *Joyful Wisdom*, Sec. 104.

⁵*Human, All-too-Human*, Vol. I, Sec. 481. See also below.

own life, and one might well ask whether it pays in the end.⁶ Nietzsche objects to an excessive preoccupation with military matters in time of peace. Conscription may be a good thing as an antidote against decadence, but there are, he thinks, other preventives of decadence which do not entail such a waste of energy.

Moreover, he had his suspicions about the honesty and the wisdom of the doctrine of "Armed Peace". His criticism here is well worth noting.⁷

To one more item I would refer in this connection—Nietzsche's own ideal was not the dominance of any one people, but a cosmopolitan culture. This is attested by his most favorite phrase, "European men." He insists that the day of separate, hostile nationalities is passing, that it has been preserved mainly in the interest of certain royal dynasties, or of social and commercial classes, but that a blending is now to be looked for. In *Human, All-too-Human* he cries: "We should just fearlessly style ourselves 'good Europeans', and labor actively for the amalgamation of nations."

So much at least may be adduced in support of the thesis that Nietzsche was anti-militaristic. On the other side, there is the following passage in *Human, All-too-Human*, on war as a remedy for national weakness:—

"For nations that are growing weak and contemptible war may be prescribed as a remedy, if indeed they really want to go on living. National consumption as well as individual admits of a brutal cure. The eternal will to live and inability to die is, however, in itself already a sign of senility of emotion. The more fully and thoroughly we live, the more ready we are to sacrifice life for a single pleasurable emotion. A people that lives and feels in this wise has no need of war."

Again, Nietzsche makes an emphatic pronouncement in favor of war as indispensable:—

"It is nothing but fanaticism and beautiful-soulism to expect very much (or even, much only) from humanity when

⁶ *Human, All-too-Human*, 241; *Thoughts Out of Season*, also.

⁷ *The Wanderer and His Shadow*, p. 336 (Sec. 284).

⁸ *Human, All-too-Human*, Vol. II, Sec. 187.

it has forgotten how to wage war. For the present, we know of no other means whereby the rough energy of the camp, the deep impersonal hatred, the cold-bloodedness of murder with a good conscience, the general ardor of the system in the destruction of the enemy, the proud indifference to great losses, to one's own existence and that of one's friends, the hollow earthquake-like convulsion of the soul, can be as forcibly and certainly communicated to enervated nations as is done by every great war: owing to the brooks and streams that here break forth, which, certainly, sweep stones and rubbish of all sorts along with them and destroy the meadows of delicate cultures, the mechanism in the workshops of the mind is afterwards, in favorable circumstances, rotated by new power. Culture can by no means dispense with passions, vices, and malignities. When the Romans, after having become imperial, had grown rather tired of war, they attempted to gain new strength by beast-baitings, gladiatorial combats, and Christian persecutions. The English of to-day, who appear on the whole also to have renounced war, adopt other means in order to generate anew those vanishing forces; namely, the dangerous exploring expeditions, sea voyages and mountaineerings, nominally undertaken for scientific purposes, but in reality to bring home surplus strength from adventures and dangers of all kinds. Many other such substitutes for war will be discovered, but perhaps precisely thereby it will become more and more obvious that such a highly cultivated and therefore necessarily enfeebled humanity as that of modern Europe not only needs wars, but the greatest and most terrible wars,—consequently occasional relapses into barbarism,—lest, by the means of culture, it should lose its culture and its very existence.”*

And finally, touching certain detriments inherent in High Politics, Nietzsche writes:—

“Just as a nation does not suffer the greatest losses that war and readiness for war involve through the expenses of the war, or the stoppage of trade and traffic, or through the maintenance of a standing army,—however great these losses may now be, when eight European States expend yearly the sum of five milliards of marks thereon,—but owing to the fact that year after year its ablest, strongest, and most industrious men are withdrawn in extraordinary numbers from their proper occupations and callings to be turned into soldiers: in the same way, a nation that sets about practising high politics and securing a decisive voice among the great Powers does not suffer its greatest losses where they are usually supposed to be. In fact, from this

* *Ibid.*, Vol. I, Sec. 477.

time onward it constantly sacrifices a number of its most conspicuous talents upon the 'Altar of the Fatherland' or of national ambition, whilst formerly other spheres of activity were open to those talents which are now swallowed up by politics. But apart from these public hecatombs, and in reality much more horrible, there is a drama which is constantly being performed simultaneously in a hundred thousand acts; every able, industrious, intellectually striving man of a nation that thus covets political laurels, is swayed by this covetousness, and no longer belongs entirely to himself alone, as he did formerly; the new daily questions and cares of the public welfare devour a daily tribute of the intellectual and emotional capital of every citizen; the sum of all these sacrifices and losses of individual energy and labor is so enormous that the political growth of a nation almost necessarily entails an intellectual impoverishment and lassitude, a diminished capacity for the performance of works that require great concentration and specialization. The question may finally be asked: 'Does it then *pay*, all this bloom and magnificence of the total (which indeed only manifests itself as the fear of the new Colossus in other nations, and as the compulsory favoring by them of national trade and commerce), when all the nobler, finer, and more intellectual plants and products, in which its soil was hitherto so rich, must be sacrificed to this coarse and opalescent flower of the nation?'"¹⁰

The case is substantially before the reader.

If I may express a personal opinion in closing this paper, it would be this: According to Nietzsche, the best—the aristocratic in that sense—shall rule, and by means of force. In that respect Nietzsche approved of war, but by the term war he usually meant the battle of life. Life was to him an *ἀγών*, as the Greeks say. We have then, to *train* for the contest. The body which is whole and healthy will possess the *mens sana*. Nietzsche puts it before us that we ought unflinchingly and courageously to take our part in the eternal fight, and to face the struggle like gods. The principle of contest is an essential part of the eternal order, as Nietzsche with his naturalism and evolutionism well knew, and so he held a gladiatorial theory of existence.

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¹⁰ *Human, All-too-Human*, Vol. I, Sec. 481.

THE OUTLOOK FOR THE NEGRO

The Great War, which shook the whole world and shattered Europe, upsetting institutions, governments, and customs, and in some places (*e. g.*, Russia) turning them completely upside down, has affected variously the different orders of the Great Society. The unduly privileged it has filled with grief and despair. There is no silver lining to the cloud above them. The deluge is here, and their doom is sealed. The exploited, the oppressed and disinherited—at the other extreme—it has filled with new hopes and dreams, in which, according to Freudian laws, they are seeking full compensation for their long repressed desires and denied ideas of justice and fair play.

This is true of the American Negro no less than of the Russian, the Pole, the Jugo-Slav, the Armenian, and the other peoples of Eastern and Central Europe. For the American Negro had his share also in the war, and did his bit very creditably. He furnished 250,000 men, sent an equal number into the various war industries, purchased more than \$225,000,000 worth of the war bonds, and gave liberally to the Red Cross and other war organizations. The war made a new man of him, *and therein lies one of the chief causes of the recent clashes between some members of his race and some members of the white race.*

Borrowing terms from genetic psychology, we may say that the war brought the Negro's long period of childhood to a close and projected him almost violently into adolescence, giving him a new sense of strength and ability, mental and physical, and a corresponding desire for larger opportunities and privileges. He has now entered upon the "storm and stress" period of his racial existence, a period which, as the descriptive phrase characterizing it indicates, is the opposite of peaceful and satisfied. The Negro is going to be, for a time, more restless, possibly more lawless and troublesome, and certainly more dissatisfied, than he has been in all his history. And it is not going to be because he will have less of anything (indeed, he already has much more of everything), but because his flood of new impulses will not be under adequate control, and his wants and ambitions will have outrun both his

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own capacity to satisfy them at once, and the willingness of the whites to grant them forthwith and *in toto*.

This leads us to the second factor in the race problem—the new adjustments to the changed conditions which the whites will find it necessary to make. It is always difficult for an individual, and much more so for a group, to make such adjustments. Even parents find it difficult to adjust themselves to the changes in their children which natural growth and development bring about. It means the breaking up of old habits and attitudes and the formation of new ones. Most human beings are so lazy-minded that they hate the persons or conditions that compel them to exert themselves.

This 'lazy-mindedness' is a universal human trait of profound significance, and deserving of further consideration. Biologically and psychologically, it means resistance on the part of the mind to whatever threatens to disturb its comfortable adjustments and throw it into a state of unstable equilibrium, that is, of unrest, uncertainty, and uneasiness. In the lower animals this natural inertia meets with no counter force or stimulus; consequently each species long ago adjusted itself most comfortably and with the least expenditure of effort to its own environment, and has remained there contentedly ever since. The lower animals have made no progress. They feel no need of progress. They and their environments remain fixed.

In man there is much of the animal with its natural inertia and aversion to change. But there is also (and this it is which differentiates him from the rest of the animal kingdom) a 'divine discontent' with things and adjustments as they are: an initiative and inventiveness that impel him to explore and experiment in the hope of improving upon former conditions. This spiritual 'urge' is the secret of human advancement.

Of course, it is not present in equal degree in all human beings. In the vast majority of men the animal inertia is greater than the 'divine discontent', which accounts for the survival of outworn customs and traditions, for hyper-conservatism and lack of progress. The business of education, in the broadest sense of the term, is continuously to seek to overcome the animal inertia and to make improved adjustments to the new, the different,

difficult, and increasingly complex elements in our environment. The educated man is one who is tolerant of the new and the different, and who has the energy and intelligence to make and un-make adjustments. There is a new Negro in the South, the product of five years of human struggle which are easily the equivalent of any hundred earlier years of human history. We shall prove the quality of our education by our willingness and ability to adjust ourselves to him.

First cousin to the above-mentioned inertia is what is commonly known as prejudice. Prejudice is an undue and unwarranted aversion to or predilection for anything or anybody. It is blind and deaf to reason. Its roots reach down to the instincts which have to do with self-preservation and the perpetuation of the species, and to the habits and customs which in the long ago made living safe and easy. The species-prejudice of the lower animals and the race-prejudice of man find their explanations in these biological considerations. Lacking reason, the animals have used instinct and blind prejudice to protect themselves against actual and potential foes. But with the dawn of reason in man a new and better instrument of protection and aggression was given, and man became emancipated from the complete domination of instinct and prejudice. More and more he could afford to observe, get acquainted, and postpone action until judgment had matured and decision had been reached.

Our age has frequently been labelled the 'age of reason', but this of course is only partly true. Prejudice is by no means dead in the world. Indeed, it seems to have taken on a new lease of life. Everywhere reason and justice are at grips with prejudice and instinct in a post-bellum struggle, but happily there is little doubt of the outcome. In the new era, reason and justice will dominate instinct and prejudice.

The foregoing observations are already exemplified in the condition of the Negro in our country. Despite the increase in lynchings and mob violence during the last year and their spread over the entire country, the status of the Negro is better and higher, and his human rights more widely and readily recognized than they have ever been. Contemporary race disturbances are in reality evidences of rapid growth, not of deterioration or decay.

Everywhere in the South the whites are acknowledging that not nearly enough has been spent on Negro education, and are of their own accord making substantial increases in the appropriations therefor. Likewise, they are admitting that the housing and sanitary conditions should be greatly improved, and are making beginnings in these directions. They are not only paying the Negro much larger wages, but are admitting the justice of the increase. Judges and juries are becoming more even-handed, notwithstanding the contrary evidences that get into the newspapers. The Negroes are prospering, working with less strain, and living better than ever before. Many elements in the working classes of Europe are not so well conditioned as the Southern Negro. Despite the great change that has come over him and the difficulty of making readjustments to him, the prejudice against him has considerably decreased.

A noteworthy evidence of this fact is to be seen in the work of the Committee on the After-the-War Program to bring about a better relationship between the two races in the South. This Committee is composed of one or more citizens from each of the Southern states, and has a field agent and white and colored workers in each state, organizing county committees to meet from time to time with similar Negro committees and to discuss in a friendly and helpful way all matters that concern the well-being of both races, separately and collectively. The platform the county committees are asked to adopt is as follows: (1) Justice before the law, to include prevention of lynching and other denials of legal justice to the Negro; (2) adequate educational facilities; (3) sanitary housing and living conditions; (4) recreational facilities; (5) economic justice; (6) equality of travelling facilities; (7) welcoming returned colored soldiers; and (8) employment for colored soldiers. Some idea of the size of the work of the Committee may be gained from the fact that at the end of the first year more than \$200,000 will have been spent upon it.

Race friction and conflict, as observed above, spring from instinct and prejudice, and all the misunderstandings, suspicions, and evil passions that are bred by them. In these interracial conferences dominated by reason, such suspicions and misunderstandings tend to be dispelled, and feelings of sympathy and

goodwill and a spirit of coöperation are generated that will enable the two races to live side by side with more harmony and mutual helpfulness. The writer spent some six weeks last summer meeting with groups of representative citizens in thirty communities in South Carolina. Day after day he was agreeably surprised and often amazed by the advanced positions taken by one or more of the best citizens in these communities. Everywhere there was enthusiastic approval of the conference idea, and everywhere the desire was manifest to live with the Negro in peace and to be of substantial service to him. Similar reports continue to come from all the other Southern states.

Not less important is the work that the University Commission on Race Questions has been doing among college students during the past eight years. The Commission is composed of one representative from each of the Southern state universities. It has held a number of meetings in various Southern cities, and in all these and in several of the larger Negro colleges it has listened to presentations by capable Negroes of their side of the race problem. From time to time the Commission has issued open letters to the college men of the South, setting forth the results of its deliberations, and these have recently been collected and published in pamphlet form under the title, *Four Open Letters from the University Commission on Race Questions to the College Men of the South*. These letters deal with the crime of lynching, the need of better educational facilities for the Negro, the Negro migration, and the new reconstruction. Their publication has elicited widespread discussion and has stimulated the study of the Negro problem in Southern colleges.

These efforts to mitigate race prejudice and to secure justice for the Negro have not weakened in the slightest degree the determinations that there shall be no infusion of Negro blood in the white race, and that socially the two peoples shall remain apart. Happily, these determinations are in accord with the wishes of all self-respecting Negroes, and as the pride of race continues to develop in their people, the large amount of friction now due to the fear of these things on the part of the whites will cease. Both peoples need to realize that racial integrity is not incompatible with mutual respect. The brotherhood of man towards which civili-

zation is struggling does not mean a promiscuous mingling of the races, but only a decent and wholesome regard for the personality of each race.

Less strong is the determination to deny to the Negro all political privileges. Numbers of Southerners are admitting that no obstacle to voting should be put in the way of respectable, property-owning Negroes. But the memories of the corrupt and humiliating Negro rule during the Reconstruction period continue to hang over the South like a pall. If the white South could believe that the Negro would vote for the best measures and men, and not for the worst, the opposition to his enfranchisement would be reduced to a minimum. But there is a natural reluctance to jeopardize again the white civilization by an act of impractical idealism. The Negro must clearly earn his enfranchisement and prove his fitness for it, not merely insist on it as his right. No group has a right to tear down civilization, or to lower the standard of culture already attained. A fundamental democratic principle is that the right to govern should rest solely upon the capacity to govern, but until the Negroes generally show their capacity those who now have it will suffer more or less curtailment of their right.

Here we encounter a species of prejudice that is most unjust and unjustifiable in its operation, and which must be overcome, if the fullest measure of justice and fair play is to obtain in the relationship between the two races. It is the prejudice that makes sweeping generalizations and acts upon them as if they were true. All Negroes are lumped together, reduced to the lowest common denominator, and dealt with on that basis. As a matter of fact, there are as wide differences among Negroes as among other races. Indeed, we should speak of Negro races rather than of the Negro race. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* enumerates some four hundred different tribes in Africa, varying widely among themselves in physique and appearance, in language, customs, occupations, and in many other ways, indicating mentalities of different orders. The American Negro is also of many varieties and orders of mentality and character, the tendency to overlook which and to observe only the similarity or sameness of color among them is the cause of a large measure of the personal

wrongs suffered by the better elements of the race. The whites need to learn that the Negroes now occupy several cultural levels, and that those occupying the highest level should be treated with more consideration than is now accorded those occupying the lowest. There is a group of Negroes of high school and college education, professional and business men and women, property- and home-owning, moral, religious, useful members of the communities in which they live. A second and larger group is composed of Negroes of but little education, yet honest, steady-working, and ambitious to rise, or at least for their children to rise. A third group is composed of the improvident, unambitious, good-natured, playful, and, on occasion hard-working Negroes. Lastly, there are the immoral, vicious and criminal, the kind that fill the court-rooms and prisons. If each class were treated according to its merits, or, better still, if each individual were treated according to his merits, there would be less ground for complaint.

Complicating and aggravating the race prejudice is the almost equally powerful economic prejudice. One need not be a Marxian Socialist to recognize the enormous rôle played by the economic factor in all human affairs. Whether in California, or Georgia, or Pennsylvania, there will always be an implacable enmity between the members of a higher-standard-of-living group and those of a lower-standard-of-living group. When the Negro's standard of living shall have risen to the point where he will be unable and unwilling to live on less than the white man's minimum, the prejudice now existing against him will be considerably softened. But so long as his presence tends to lower the standard of living he will be considered a menace by those who are economically nearest to him. The economic 'signs of the times' indicate that this source of prejudice will soon be greatly diminished.

The greatest advance has been made in the direction of public equality. The disposition is rapidly growing to give the Negro equal public facilities and service for equal pay. This is seen in improved schools, parks and playgrounds, streets and houses, street-car and railroad facilities, court-room practices and business dealings. When the state legislature of South Carolina appropriated \$100,000 for a memorial to the white soldiers, it appropriated an equal amount for a memorial for the Negro soldiers.

In all things material the ideal of the white South is to be at least mathematically honest, to coöperate and be of assistance; in all things racial and social it is determined to remain distinct. It is not chauvinism to say that the heart of the South is warm and big, as human hearts go. No one knows, not even a Southerner, unless he has especially interested himself in this matter, how much fine thinking and feeling and doing for the Negro is going on all the time, for very little of this is recorded in the press. Only the frictions are heralded in flaming headlines. The Southern whites can justly make the same complaint as that often voiced by the Negroes: that only their faults and crimes are advertised to the world; their good deeds are hidden in small print and often not noticed at all. But it has always been so. The intelligent South does not complain: it is heartily ashamed of the misdeeds of some of its members, even though the provocations are often great. It knows that the true mark of the educated is self-control and respect for law and the institutions of civilized society. But when enemies and fanatics train their eyes and ears to see and hear only the evil in the South, and their tongues and pens to speak and write of it, it is permissible to point out that the notable progress the Negro has made since his emancipation, and the wealth he has accumulated, have been made and accumulated with the consent and encouragement and assistance of the white South. Without these he could hardly have moved a step. And it is safe to predict even greater and swifter progress for him, if only he will be guided by the sane, peace-loving leaders of his own and the white race in the South.

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"THAT YOUNG PRIG TELEMACHUS"

At the beginning of the *Odyssey*, Athena sends Telemachus to Sparta and sandy Pylus to seek tidings of his father and to gain a noble repute in the world. Apparently, she would give him a niche in the hall of fame beside his father and mother. If so, she failed completely of her purpose—for the only time in either the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*. Telemachus made no impression on the Greek poets: the Muse rejected him. It is not he, but Telegonus who is the hero of the last epic of the Trojan Cycle, and we look for him in vain in Attic Tragedy, although other children of heroes of the Trojan war find honorable places there. Even the attempt of certain ancient grammarians to claim the descent of the Romans from Odysseus through Telemachus failed to appeal to the imagination either of their own or of later times. With a single exception he has made no impression on modern literature (unless we include *Mare Nostrum*), and Fénelon's *Télémaque* is a rather doubtful compliment, to put it mildly. The greatest Hellenist of the western world has voiced his opinion of Telemachus in the words which we have taken for our title; and Professor Gildersleeve is not alone in his aversion to the young prince; an English scholar calls him 'a young ass', and Hayman, the sympathetic interpreter of Homer, finds no strong or great qualities in his character. If this unfavorable verdict be just, it is worth while to ask why the poet so unflatteringly painted the portrait of one of the two leading characters of his poem. For undoubtedly Telemachus is, next to his father, the most prominent person in the *Odyssey*. He appears in sixteen of the twenty-four books, and speaks more often than any other character, divine or human, in either *Iliad* or *Odyssey*, except Achilles and Odysseus, the respective heroes of the two poems. If one object of the speeches in Homer is the revelation of character, we have a clear portrait of Telemachus. Did the poet fail, or did he intentionally depict an unattractive personality,—a prig indeed?

The prig stands at the top in the *hiérarchis des genres* of the objectionables,—mucker, rotter, bounder, prig. He is the aristocrat among the outlanders whom we do not admit within the

pale of our affection and our admiration. All these may have their own peculiar virtues, as we sometimes in magnanimous mood may admit, but let them keep out of our way! If one of them approach us we instantly draw in those intangible filaments by which we put ourselves into spiritual communication with others of our kind; we bank the fires of our souls, and remain inwardly aloof and frigid until the object of our aversion has disappeared.

The prig errs, as Aristotle would say, by an excess of virtue. Like the Sheriff of Nottingham in the favorite comic opera of a generation ago, "He never yet made one mistake." But here the likeness ceases; the prig never completes the couplet, for if he should add, "I'd like to for variety's sake," he would not be a prig. The prig is content with himself, not because he likes himself, but because, like all his kind and kindred kinds, he *is* an outlander. All his thoughts and feelings are centripetal, and the points of contact with others, those anodes and cathodes which make the flow of spirit possible, in him are only rudimentary. He never has a real friend of his own rank, although he may have many admirers, and his family may love him, and so may a good woman—as Miss Byron loved Sir Charles Grandison. But to all these admirers and lovers he is not a prig, as he is to us.

Let us examine the portrait of Telemachus, and see if we can place him in the gallery of the prigs of literature along with Sir Charles and the lesser lights. Our candidate has all the external qualifications. "I never saw a handsomer or genteeler man," writes Mr. Reeves, after his first meeting with Sir Charles. Telemachus is as handsome as could be desired. He awakens the admiration of the Ithacan assembly, and at Sparta one glance is enough to assure Eteoneus that he is like the offspring of mighty Zeus. In fact, he is of finer physical mould than his father. Odysseus is a trifle short in the legs; he is at a disadvantage when standing beside Menelaus; only when both are seated is Odysseus the more stately. But Telemachus has length of limb as well as of trunk; Mentos wonders if so tall a lad can be the son of Odysseus. Perhaps Telemachus derived his stature from his mother. We know that she was a beauty, and in Homeric times a woman, as well as a man, must be tall if she would be called beautiful. Aside from his

height, the young prince resembles his father. Mentès recognizes his paternity by the wonderful likeness of his head and beautiful eyes; Menelaus, by his head, his hair, his glance, his hands and his feet—which the sandals revealed more than do modern shoes.¹ Telemachus is stronger than all the other princes of the realm; at the third assay he would have bent the great bow that none but Odysseus could string, if his father had not forbidden him by a nod. The epithets which the poet gives him likewise indicate his superiority. He is godlike, great-souled, great-hearted, strong and mighty—a typical Homeric hero—and he is invariably the 'prudent' son of a wise-hearted mother and a sagacious father.

Nor could one wish for a 'genteeler man' than Telemachus. His courtesy is seen in many of the episodes of the *Odyssey*, but in none to better advantage than that which describes his visit to the hut of the swineherd, whither Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, had preceded him. When Eumæus reproaches him with the infrequency of his visits the young man replies: "Well, this time I've come to see you," and he bids the beggar keep his seat. He thinks shame that the stranger Mentès should stand waiting at the door, and welcomes him in just the right phrase. He delicately recognizes Nestor's part in the Trojan war, when he asks him about tidings of Odysseus, and he tells Menelaus, after the latter's long story of his wanderings, that he could sit and hear him talk for a year without becoming weary. As for Helen, she threw the spell of her beauty over him as she did over all men; he devours her gift with his eyes, and on his return home, in the very brief account of his visit which he gives to his mother, he includes mention of Helen, but with the greatest delicacy and tact. There is not a character in the Homeric poems whose manners are more finished.

In this we may see the careful training of his mother. We must not think of Penelope as a weeping beauty during all the twenty years of her husband's absence. As long as no one took the death of Odysseus for granted, or at least regarded it as

¹"I don't care what that man's name is," says Thomas Hardy's cobbler, "but he's John Woodward's brother. I can swear to the family foot."

probable, she had no particular cause for grief. The news that the great war was over travelled slowly in those days, and at least one other hero, Menelaus, was years in reaching home. But the wooing of the Suitors created a change both in her situation and in her feelings. She must now decide whether to believe that Odysseus is dead or still living, and to face the possibility of marrying again. She postpones the decision by a trick, working late into the night to unravel the weaving of the day, and meanwhile vainly endeavoring to reach a decision. Hence her tears and her unceasing desire to learn from every wayfarer and seer, real and pretended, the likelihood of her husband's return. Hence, too, the neglect of her household and of Telemachus. The latter takes it for granted that he may be gone a week or more without being missed by his mother, and Eumæus remarks casually to his beggar-guest: "From my mistress there is never a gentle word, no, nor a kindly act, since this curse of overweening men fell on our family." Eurycleia, the old nurse of Odysseus, looks after the great hall and the women slaves as best she can, but the servants are growing slack: the old hound of Odysseus no longer receives any care. All this testifies to the mental state of the distracted queen and mother during the three unhappy years before the story opens. But before this she had seventeen years in which to give her son the training due his station. Her only words to Telemachus in the presence of the Suitors refer to this: "Telemachus, as a boy you had more discretion, now you have lost it (*i. e.*, all I taught you). What conduct! To think of suffering a stranger to be insulted! Suppose a guest should be treated thus!" Of course Telemachus was merely carrying out the plan which his father had made, but the queen could not know this. She only felt that all the pains she had taken in the training of her son had gone for naught.

And she had not only moulded the manners of Telemachus; she had also kept constantly before his mind his absent father, and had made the image so vivid that it took the place of all else in the young man's imagination. When we first see him at the opening of the tale he is sitting among the Suitors, but not associating with them; he has no interest in the outcome of any of their games.

His mind's eye is on his father, and the one happy thought that comes to him nowadays is this: "If he would only come from any quarter under God's heaven, and work havoc among these Suitors!" A lonely boy, and as distracted as his mother is by the unsolved problem of what to do with the Suitors!

That the character of Telemachus is only what was to have been expected of a lad brought up at home under female supervision, as some hold, is true to a certain extent. If he had had a brother, for example, he might have been different; Nausicaa, the only sister of five brothers, is as self-reliant as a man; and Dolon, the only son in a family of six children, lacks virility. It is true that woman's influence over the lad was supreme up to his eighteenth year. We have no reason to believe that there was any close bond between the young prince and his grandfather, for if we are right in assuming that Penelope had interested herself closely in the education of her son until the Suitors came, we may conclude that Telemachus had not been encouraged to visit his grandfather frequently. Certainly, the withdrawal of Laertes from the palace on the death of his wife does not point to any very great affection between the old man and his daughter-in-law. The poet pictures him broken by grief for his dead wife and the son whom he believes to be dead, living the life of a recluse and taking little interest in anything but his vines and trees—another lonely soul! So the moulding of the young man's character during the three years of budding manhood was left to the old nurse and the swineherd,—slaves, but of princely blood, and both the devoted servants of Odysseus, not of Penelope. The old nurse was now in charge of the great storeroom and the hall where the Suitors dined, and not she, but Eurynome, was the confidential attendant on the queen. Eurycleia had nursed Odysseus as a babe, and Eumæus loved him like an elder brother. It was just what was to be expected, therefore, that for the three years prior to the opening of the tale the mind of Telemachus should have been turned against his mother. For the two slaves with whom he was now thrown almost entirely could not help feeling, and consequently expressing, at least indirectly, their hostility to the queen on two points: her apparent willingness—apparent, because the urgency of her father and

brothers must also be taken into consideration—to consider the prospect of marrying again before it was known that Odysseus was dead; and, secondly, the result of her indecision upon the material resources of their beloved master and his son. The stewardess saw her stores of flour, wine and oil rapidly diminishing, and the swineherd, his droves of choice swine daily robbed of the finest beasts. Hence both the swineherd and the nurse must have prejudiced the young man, albeit unconsciously, against his mother.

Some scholars find Telemachus warm-hearted and affectionate toward his mother. I must confess that I find in the poem very little data for that conclusion. The stock example of the prig in our own literature loved his mother to distraction. Sir Charles was inconsolable when his mother died. So might Telemachus have been if he had lost his mother three years before the story opens. After that he never uses words of affection in addressing her, and once he calls her "cruel mother". His words to her are regularly brusque and curt. "No more weeping, I pray you!" "Go to your room and bathe your eyes." That he pictures her as continually in tears is also to be inferred from his instructions to Eurycleia when he is departing for Pylus and Sparta: "Don't tell my mother; I want no more tears to spoil her beauty." On this passage alone is based the conclusion that Telemachus shows affection for his mother; it is pointed out that this is a tender and considerate thought. Perhaps it would have been if he had not added: "that she may not spoil her beautiful complexion." For whom pray, is she so careful about her looks? Certainly not for him, whom she is not likely to think of for several days to come. No, it is for the Suitors, the ruiners of his happiness and his prospects, who have just told him before all the assembly that his mother keeps sending them secret messages of encouragement. In the light of this passage the thoughtfulness of Telemachus presents itself rather as the grimmest of irony.

After the three horrible years it is doubtful whether the boy could love anyone distractedly. The springs of affection in him seem to have quite dried up. The daughter of Nestor's old age, Polycaste, who gave the young prince the most delicate attention,

does not make his blood flow faster by a single pulse-beat; he has no interest in stopping at her home on his return from Sparta, and he tells the Suitors that his mother is superior to any woman at Pylus. He submits to, rather than shares in, the embraces of his two faithful slaves when he reaches home, and he visits his mother, "that she may see me and cease weeping," not to see *her*. It is also remarkable that when at last in the hut of the swineherd his father stands revealed before him, and father and son are wrapped in a close embrace, it is he and not the elder man who first unclasps his arms and speaks. Contrast the recognition scene between the hero and Penelope: it is now Odysseus who first has enough of embracing and who utters the first words. The only display of spontaneous affection on the part of Telemachus is when he calls Pisistratus "dear to this heart of mine." This, be it noted, is after Telemachus has left Ithaca, and when his character is beginning to change, as we shall presently observe.

We have so far passed over the leading trait of the young man as we see him at first. This is an inferior variety of what Mr. Paul More in one of his essays calls "the inner check". Telemachus is one of those not altogether admirable creatures who are too fond of saying 'no' and who find it difficult to assent to anything. He bids his mother not to interfere with the singing of Phemius, the Suitors not to make a noise, and Eurycleia not to tell anyone that he is going to Pylus. He tells Menelaus that he cannot accept the gift of horses and that he cannot stay—but he does stay—and he orders Eumæus not to inform Laertes of his safe arrival. This fondness for the negative is also seen in his view of himself. He has no hope of an improvement of his situation, not even if a god should interfere in his behalf. He has no strength to fight the Suitors. He knows not how to address Nestor. There is no hope of his father's return, although many a seer may prophesy it. Down in his heart he has made the great renunciation: he looks forward to death at the hands of the Suitors. Of course he is a pessimist: "Zeus is the cause of your troubles, Mother." "I might have been the son of a fortunate man had not the gods, *who contrive an evil lot for mortals*, willed it otherwise." The boy's thoughts have been

turned inward too much, and have been allowed, as it were, to feed upon themselves; he had no equal with whom to converse, and the two slaves who were his constant companions could think only of Odysseus and the past.

Chief among the lad's gloomy thoughts is the increasing havoc which the Suitors are making in the family wealth. The prudence of father and mother are strongly developed in the son. Telemachus is the canniest of persons. He tells Mentès that he would rather be the son of a man who lived to a green old age in the midst of his possessions than of Odysseus, and he longs for his father's return chiefly because that means to him the restoration of the estate. "Menelaus, give me if thou canst some tidings of my father; my home is being devoured; my fat fields ruined; my flocks and herds continually slaughtered by overweening men." "If I send my mother to her father's home against her will I must make restitution to Icarius." Mentès thinks shame of the conduct of the Suitors, Telemachus rather of their inroads on his patrimony. Father and mother are in a sense less to him than flocks and herds.

Canniness, amounting at times almost to sordidness, and a moody pessimism, do not contribute to gladness of heart, and there are few youths to be found in literature who are sadder than Telemachus when we first make his acquaintance. Edmond Schérer remarks that one must be born good-humored if one is to be happy. Was good-humor one of the gifts which Zeus allotted to the young prince at his birth? We think it at least possible, and the son of Odysseus should have come rightly by it. Certainly, even in the early part of the poem there are now and then flashes of naïve whimsicality in the lad's otherwise sombre words: "Stranger, what ship brought you here? I don't suppose you walked." "My mother says that I am the son of Odysseus. I don't know. No one of himself knows who his father is." "Antinous, would you call it the worst thing in the world to be king? A throne is not a bad possession."

The features of the young prince's portrait which we have traced so far are chiefly those which the first part of the poem reveals. As the story unfolds there is a change—the only change of this kind in either *Iliad* or *Odyssey*. Character in Homer is

static. The time of the action is too limited to do more than make clear the traits already formed. But in the single exception to this rule, by means of the machinery of divine intervention, Telemachus, whose development has been repressed during the three most impressionable years of his life, passes from boyhood to manhood before our eyes. As an angel stirred the pool of Bethesda to efficacy by troubling its waters, so the visit of Mentos, and the words which the disguised goddess utters—in which there is many a barbed point—cause a turmoil of the elements in the boy's mind, and a miracle leads to their crystallization. At the close of Athena's words he is a mere child; fifty verses later the poet calls him a 'godlike man'. The suddenness of the transition is explained by the divine power of Athena, and would have seemed natural to the poet's audience. Furthermore, this new manhood, thus suddenly acquired, is only potential; it needs disciplining and experience. In the events which follow, especially on his journey, diffidence gives place to confidence, despondency to hope. All this comes gradually and naturally. Success crowns his first assertion of his rightful place as head of the family and master of his palace. His mother obeys his first command without a word; the Suitors, outwardly at least, treat his utterance as worthy of consideration. The favorable attention of the Ithacan assembly, a chance word, an omen, all give him confidence for his maiden speech. His guardian angel Athena helps him prepare for his journey, and coaches him in his first experience with strange Achæan princes. Gradually the assistance is withdrawn. Athena leaves him at Pylus. Nestor's son Pisistratus, a mortal, then plays mentor to him until he feels somewhat at home in the palace of Menelaus. From this point onward he is able to act for himself. He returns to Ithaca a well-poised man, capable of meeting any situation. Only in mood is the change in him not so apparent. An unnatural boy at the beginning of the poem, he is still prematurely old in mind even during the first part of the tale of the Vengeance. It is only with the return of his father that he begins to grow young. He can laugh now at the thought of his mother planning to marry one of the Suitors; he can answer his mother gently; he actually makes a mistake, for the only time in the story, in forget-

ting to close the door of the armory; he boasts twice, and he disobeys his father in the way in which he executes the false maids.

The portrait which we have been examining is painted in sombre colors, and the young man whom it reveals to us is not very attractive. He is only a handsome, well-bred prince, who has been left alone by the one intimate companion of his own rank that he knew, his mother, under circumstances that make him doubt her affection. Dame Care has taken her place, and is tormenting him, now with the thought of his ruined fortunes, now with his own weakness and helplessness. To him, as to Hamlet and Orestes, the time is out of joint; unlike them, he feels no call, from within his own heart or from heaven, to set it right. Whatever he contributes to the unravelling of the plot is done in obedience to the commands of others, to Athena, the protectress of his family, and to Odysseus after his return. The impulse to act does not come from within. In this passivity lies, we think, the essential defect of the portrait.

We may regret that Homer thus took from Telemachus all claim to a place among the heroes of literature. Yet a little reflection will show that he could not have done otherwise. If the portrait of the young prince had been painted in brighter colors, and if he had been given a more positive character, there would have been danger of diverting the attention somewhat from the hero of the tale. The poet never does this. In the *Iliad* Achilles may sulk in his tent, but scattered throughout the episodes which occur during his absence from the fighting are references enough to keep us from forgetting his prowess and his supreme importance in the story. So in the *Odyssey* the hero, absent or present, is always the central figure in our minds, and the characters, aside from Odysseus, on whom the poet expends the most pains—Nausicaa and Eumæus, and perhaps Eurycleia—are distinctly subordinate, so that they in no way bear comparison with the hero.

A second reason why the poet did not make the character of Telemachus more attractive is that, after all, the latter is only a part of the poetic machinery. Of course, his assistance is essential to the *dénouement*, and, aside from this, he has two distinct uses

in the economy of the tale. In the first place, it is through Telemachus that the poet, always keeping himself in the background, can make us understand the sad state of affairs at Ithaca when Odysseus returns, the turbulence of the Suitors, and the loneliness of the several members of the hero's family. This explains why the young man cannot be on too intimate terms with his mother; the poet wishes us to see her completely isolated, with no sympathetic member of her household, or outside of it, to whom she may go for counsel. Secondly, although the ostensible purpose of the journey of Telemachus is to gain tidings of his father, the poet's own object is to obtain thus a natural way of telling us how the heroes of the Trojan war came home and how Ajax and Agamemnon died, and to show us Helen in a fairer light than we saw her in the *Iliad*.

An ancient writer describes the *Odyssey* as an epilogue to the *Iliad*. This hints at the ultimate reason for the poet's failure to make a hero of Telemachus. Homer's interest is overwhelmingly centered in the Trojan war and its heroes. The *Odyssey* is full of reminiscence of what happened at Troy, and, as I have said, describes the return or death of most of the heroes. But it contains hardly a word about what happened at Ithaca during the twenty years of the hero's absence; no story, for example, of the childhood or boyhood of Telemachus. A modern poet, we are sure, would have introduced a scene in which mother and son talk of the happy days before the Suitors came. But Homer gives us only a picture of the home as it was when the story opens—mother, son, and the whole estate under a cloud of gloom and distress which takes away all the bright colors. The slight traces of individuality in the character of Telemachus show what the poet could have done if he had chosen. We only wish that he had written a sequel, or at least that in his own mind there were better days in store for the young prince, which would restore to him the years that the locust had eaten. We should like to see him when Dame Care has been forgotten, and he has recovered the youth that was denied him; when he plagued Eurycleia and Eumæus, and teased his grandfather for cattle to buy himself an inlaid dagger. We should like to read how he flirted with Helen, and went a-wooing of Polycaste; in other words,

became the boy that the son of the crafty Odysseus should by right have been. It is true that he might have been less desirable as an ancestor of the Romans, but at least he would have escaped being made the intolerable creature of the *Télémaque*. For the Bishop of Cambrai made Telemachus a prig if ever there was one. Homer, we think, did not: he drew a picture in dull and monotonous colors, but of a young man with interesting possibilities.

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FRANCIS JAMMES, PRIMITIVE

Francis Jammes is the poet of Orthez, as closely associated with that little village in the mountains as Wordsworth with Grasmere or Robert Frost with his "North-of-Boston". He has always in his view the cold peaks of the Pyrenees, yellow and threatening on the approach of winter, and in the rainy spring showing their blue veins, which make them more luminous than glass. Every year, in the season of love, he may witness the departure of "the great severe shepherds" for their cabins by the lakes of Barèges, where they shall see the jonquils, the prairies,— "where the water silvers, froths, and leaps, and laughs." Along the slopes are the woods where he hunts the wild duck; lower down is the mountain stream, the "*gave*", overflowing its banks in spring; "between the shining woods and the racing stream are the wheat, the corn, and the twisted vines." And here are "the black door-sills where the blue smoke hovers." Orthez, "humble village, of rude and sibilant sound", is so characterized by the poet, Charles Guérin, in his account of a visit to the home of his friend; and he goes on to describe the house in which Francis Jammes was living with his mother, a one-story, cedar-shaded, ivy-grown farmhouse, with the grass pushing up between the stones of the courtyard about the laurel and the well of blue water. Here it is, in his *Elegy* addressed to the poet Samain, that Jammes invited his dead friend to make him a visit as in the old days:—

"Viens encore. C'est Orthez où tu es. Bonheur est là.
Pose donc ton chapeau sur la chaise qui est là.
Tu as soif? Voici de l'eau de puits bleue et du vin.
Ma mère va descendre et te dire: 'Samain. . .'
Et ma chienne appuyer son museau sur ta main."

Here it is that he has been content to pass the unambitious days of life, overseeing the work of the farm, "assisting" at the vintage, driving to market on a Tuesday.

I.

This rural poet seems to have little of the traditional appetite for literary glory. His dog, his pipe, his grain-fields, and his

little church in the fields, limit his outlook and content him. He prays in his poems to be of as little account as a donkey or a poor beggar-man. But the humble shall be exalted, and the poet of Orthez is celebrated far beyond the bounds of his own land. He has been translated into Spanish by the Mexican poet, Enrique Martinez; a chapter was devoted to him in his *Frank Poets* by Christian Rimestad, the Dane, and one by Miss Lowell in her pioneering study, *Six French Poets*. His latest biography, by the Flemish poet, Jan van Nölen, was recently published in Holland. He had been the subject of laudatory articles in various countries, and in France he is acknowledged as one of the purest talents of the "modern school". He has had a great influence on the later developments in French poetry; and in Belgium there is a distinct school of Christian poets *à la Jammes*.¹

It is, at first blush, the more surprising to find him thus promoted to literary kingship, inasmuch as he has never undertaken to produce 'literature'. And yet this is a familiar phenomenon, —this turning back from 'literature' to poetry. Literature is forever tending to become a polished and pleasing rhetoric, the creation of a sensitive intelligence and a strong will-to-art rather than of simple unsophisticated feeling. Hardly a greater effort is conceivable for a poet than the effort to erase all second-hand impressions from his mind, to contemplate life again in its original simplicity. To do this is to discover his 'originality'; and such an achievement is welcomed sooner or later by a world of readers weary of echoes. His verse is dewy with that mysterious beauty of freshness which is wanting in so many poets of far greater technical perfection. He gives us candidly his impressions of his daily life, with little concern to please the public or the critics, without torturing his words to fit the forms prescribed by theorists. "I could have imitated the style of Flaubert or of Leconte de Lisle," he says in the preface to his early *Vers*, "and I could have repeated like others a stamped pattern.

¹Among his more important volumes of poems are: *Vers* (privately printed), 1893; *De l'Angelus de l'aube à l'Angelus du soir*, 1898; *Le Deuil des primevères*, 1901; *Le Triomphe de la vie*, 1902; *Pensée des jardins*, 1906; *Clairières dans le ciel*, 1906; *Les Georgiques chrétiennes*, 1912; *La Vierge et les sonnets*, 1919. During the war he published *Prières en temps de guerre*.

I have written irregular verses, disdaining, or nearly so, all rules of form and metre. My style stammers, but I have spoken according to my own truth."

This disdain of theories and schools¹ is the more pleasing when one recalls how modern French poetry has gone on producing, by a process of fission, an ever-increasing number of "cénacles". One historian of recent literature has listed seriously—or was it with extreme irony?—no fewer than sixty or seventy of them, the mushroom growth of twenty-five years, each with its obscure-illustrious leader. Each one of them has announced, with wide exorcising gestures for all that went before, the advent of the only great Art—and each has joined its predecessors and competitors in the graveyard of oblivion: naturism, impulsivism, futurism, unanism, synthetism, intensism, paroxysm, and all the other banners in the motley pageant of late French literature. To the earlier ambition of the seventeen-year-old French youth—to write an historical tragedy in alexandrines and in six acts—has succeeded the ambition, it would seem, of founding a new literary school. The faith and energy of these restless founders is touching, indeed, but why "toujours penser en bande"? Why substitute for the tenets and narrowing rules of an older school an equally narrowing set of new rules? Jammes claims the right to complete freedom of personal feeling, to originality of vision and of diction.

Among modern French poets Jammes is remarkable for his simplicity. Since the time of Mallarmé and Rimbaud, many poets of intellectual distinction (Jules Laforgue, René Ghil) have indulged in a kind of grandiose and apocalyptic obscurity of thought, and a tortuousness of expression, which largely exclude the non-initiated from the enjoyment of their refined art. The super-subtlety of many symbolists, their generally abstruse mysticism (Édouard Schuré), their artificiality, their hair-splitting acuteness in self-analysis, stamp their work as exceptional and individualistic, the art of intellectuals, and largely for intellectuals. They stand aloof from the multitude, even from hu-

¹See also Jammes's *Manifeste littéraire* in the *Mercur de France* for March, 1897.

manity itself. But Jammes disdains the pride of the intellect. He is no analyst of the ego in its fluctuations, its impalpable shades of thought and feeling, noting in rare and jewelled verse, like de Gourmont in his *Litanies*, all the subtle, wavering changes of his delicate 'soul'. He is even a little proud, it seems, of his intellectual naïveté: "and I, I do not know what my thoughts think"—

"Et moi, je ne sais pas ce que mes pensées pensent."

He might be a disciple of Thoreau. He has freed himself from the non-essentials of existence in order to live life for its own sake, to be simply man. He has cast off all the burdens of fashion, wealth, pride, even of thought, doubt and learning—all that makes our lives so nervously tense and distracting, and turned to the things which are essential, vital, primitive. A sharpening of enjoyment results from such a finely tempered asceticism. The fullest life lies in simplicity.

II.

Poetry, for such an one, is not invested with the sacerdotal glamor and awe of the symbolists. It is humble work, humble as a stonemason's, to which, indeed, Jammes compares it. It is a patient transcription of nature, like that of the old masters in painting, who, he tells us, spent a long while on the eyes, and on the lips, and the cheeks and the ears, of those who were happy enough to be their subjects. His is the humility, or the proud democracy, of nature herself. Nature, he thinks, may be presented with no adornment but her own, and without the apology of elaborate personification, Horatian epithet and classic allusion.

It is of the essence of his religious sentiment to feel that nothing is too humble for art, there being none of God's creatures which he must not approach with reverential wonder. He mentions in verse plants, animals, and objects in general, humble, forgotten things, or things despised, which seemed forever excluded from the language of poetry, although Chaucer and Villon might serve as reminders of an earlier, pre-Victorian order of things. We were still under the spell—not long since—of the neoclassics, still bowing more or less to their injunction

not to mention in verse any 'base' objects, such as animals of the lower kind, and in any case to prefer the general to the particular, as more refined. We still prefer 'fish' to 'herring', and the democratic 'bloater' is altogether excluded. Jammes has undertaken in French poetry what Wordsworth undertook, with considerable success in English,—to do away with the tradition of 'poetical' subjects. As with Wordsworth, too, this breadth in the choice of subject-matter is associated with, is perhaps rooted in, a religious mysticism; but in both cases it shows itself in many observations little connected with religious feeling, and in his claim to freedom in this matter the modern poet makes no appeal to other principles than those of poetic naturalism. This poet writes of fish and fishing with distinctions as precise as those of Izaak Walton himself. In *Jean de Noarrieu*, it was a delightful invention of the story-teller to have the infidelity of the girl revealed to her lover by the mountain flowers she carries,—gentians and edelweiss and pale pink laurel. They had been sent her by the shepherd from his airy cabin; but she says they are a present from a girl friend, who gathered them on the near-by hillside. Jean de Noarrieu knows better, and he replies in a voice low and dry: "Lucie, these flowers are mountain flowers."

" Et elle dit: ' Il y en a aussi
sur le coteau où est la métairie
dedans laquelle habite mon amie.'
Et en mentant, encore elle rougit
—' Ce sont des fleurs de montagne, te dis-je!
Elles ne mentent jamais à leur pays.' "

Jammes writes, then, with his eye on the object, as Wordsworth prescribed; and he writes with a Wordsworthian joy in the unvarnished facts of nature. Every hour of the day and night, every change of the seasons is recorded, is literally sung, with lingering tenderness, with the joy of fresh discovery, with brooding melancholy, or with positive rapture, according to the mood of the poet. His naturalism is not incompatible with the most graceful action of the fancy. What could be more 'poetic' than the description of the song of the nightingale—

"ses trois appels suivis d'un rire en pleurs de source"?

The love of nature as she is in literal truth does not prevent the poet from suggesting those intimate and haunting correspondences between the material and the spiritual fact. In his mood of prayerful and humble resignation to the divine order, he finds the most touching analogies for his spirit in the aspect of nature.

"Je me laisse aller comme la courbe des collines."

He does not even disdain the use of language of much more symbolistic flavor. In the thirteenth of his *Elegies*, which is in the symbolist manner throughout, he tells his mystical fiancée that he has prepared for her the green freshness of his dreams, where lambs sleep, and he invites her to the cell of his contemplations, "whence one can hear running the living water under the mints which the white sun consumes"—

"d'où l'on entend courir l'eau vive sous les menthes
que le soleil blanc consume."

III.

More direct and obvious is the reading of nature in religious terms, once more after the fashion of Wordsworth, but with a greater naïveté of anthropomorphic realism. The sense of natural objects as living in the breath of God is present throughout all his work, even the most secular. In the love-chronicle of Jean de Noarrieu, in the moonlit night of love, "the garden prays; one feels the heart-beat of the peaches in the silence of God." Over and over again, in the *Fourteen Prayers*, one returns to this pantheistic feeling of the immanence of God and the divine joy in the most insignificant of creatures. The fields and pastures "lie there like a great ocean of goodness over which fall light and serenity, and, to feel their sap in the sunlight bright with joy, the leaves sing as they stir in the woods."

It is in this ocean of divine goodness that the poet would plunge his sick soul to find oblivion of self. He would like to "come back down into his simplicity," to watch the wasps work in the sand, to be wise like them, and accomplish without pride the work God has given him to do. He has not always lived the life of simple piety which is his ideal. He has thought himself a genius, has desired fame; he has craved love and sought for

happiness; he has indulged in himself "the learned reason that makes mad." But now he has had enough of the "complicated and learned life." He will no longer set himself apart from other men, or from the meaner creatures of God. He will let himself go, as readily compliant to the will of God as a butterfly to the breath of the wind. Sorrow will make him as gentle as the laborer patiently following the plough in the midst of the horned cattle.

Most of this has a natural enough sound to an English ear, even when falling in the cadences and among the associations of poetry. Rather more surprising, in its somewhat conscious *naïveté*, and most charming and original in conception, is the *Prayer* "to go to heaven with the donkeys." He says he will choose a day and a way to suit himself, and then—"I will take my stick and on the highroad I will go, and I will say to my friends the donkeys: 'I am Francis Jammes and I'm going to Paradise, for there is no hell in the land of the Good-God.' I will say to them: 'Come along, sweet friends of the blue sky, poor dear beasts who, with a brisk movement of the ear, drive away flies, blows and bees.' . . . O God, grant that I may appear before you in the midst of these beasts whom I love so much because they lower their heads gently, and in stopping join their little feet in a way so sweet and pitiful. I shall arrive followed by their thousands of ears, followed by those who used to carry baskets at their sides," etc., etc. "Grant that, resting in this sojourn of souls, by your divine waters, I may be like the asses who shall mirror their sweet and humble poverty in the limpidity of the eternal love."

"Je prendrai mon bâton et sur la grande route
j'irai, et je dirai aux ânes, mes amis:
Je suis Francis Jammes et je vais au Paradis,
car il n'y a d'enfer au pays du Bon-Dieu.
Je leur dirai: Venez, doux amis du ciel bleu,
pauvres bêtes chéries qui, d'un brusque mouvement d'oreille
chassez les mouches plates, les coups et les abeilles. . . .

"Que je vous apparaisse au milieu de ces bêtes
que j'aime tant parce qu'elles baissent la tête
doucement, et s'arrêtent en joignant leurs petite pieds
d'un facon bien douce et qui vous fait pitié.

J'arriverai suivi de leurs milliers d'oreilles,
suivi de ceux qui portèrent au flanc des corbeilles. . . .

"et faites que, penché dans ce séjour des âmes,
sur vos divines eaux, je sois pareil aux ânes
qui mireront leur humble et douce pauvreté
à la limpidité de l'amour éternel."

This may seem to smack rather of *simplesse* than of *simplicité*, as Arnold distinguishes them,—this religious democracy à la St. Francis. But the suggestion of artifice lies in the dramatic presentation, in the somewhat fanciful picture of the poet, with his walking-stick, arriving in Paradise with his nimbus of asses' ears; and there is no reason to question the genuineness of feeling that underlies the poem. His work overflows with unaffected sympathy and brotherly feeling for the lower animals,—for lambs, dogs, sparrows, as well as for beggar-men and the unfortunate and despised of our species. And there is a medicinal virtue for him in the exercise of putting himself on a level with these fellow-charges of Providence. We all know the feeling: and we unconsciously assume an attitude of humility, a lower stature, that shall make us a less shining mark for the arrows of fortune, and bring us under the indulgence of Him who notes the fall of a sparrow. The sensitive heart of the poet, having experienced the "irony of love," hopeless of happiness and tired of self-dissection, longs to return to the state of the brute, of the patient wretch so low in the scale of fortune that he has neither hope nor fear, nor even the direction of his own course. He loves particularly to rest the tired eyes of his soul with the thought of night, figuring a mental darkness. "I feel the night upon me as it is upon the fields when the sun goes out like a lamp in the evening. I see no longer within myself. I am like the evening that hides from sight the gleaners of azure across the prairies of the thoughts of my soul."

Such is the meditation to which he summons himself in his prayer; the concentration of mind, or *recueillement*, which shall simplify his spirit. It is not a matter of enlarging his thought; it is partly, indeed, an inhibition of thought in its logical ranges. It is very much a matter of sensation, and very much a matter of sentiment. It is, in short, revery, dream.

"Je songe. J'ai souffert. Je ne sais plus. Je songe."

In such a state the dreamer lets himself float luxuriously upon the stream of sensation, of feeling only pleasantly tinged with thought, of thought guided by feeling. Thought and effort divorce one from that common life of things with which it is the desire of the mystic to identify himself. In the ecstasy of love, worldly or spiritual, he cries: "I can no longer think. I am nought but things."

It is a return to the great undifferentiated consciousness—a descent into the subliminal. This is what the poet means when he bids himself "come back down into thy simplicity."

"Redescends, redescends dans ta simplicité."

IV.

If he reminds us of St. Francis, he reminds us quite as much of that more sophisticated "fratello," Jean Jacques. With St. Francis he shares the humble renunciation, the mystical love of all created things. But his mysticism is not visionary and ecstatic like that of St. Francis; it is tempered with a sensuousness, even a naïve sensuality, and sounds a pastoral note more like Rousseau's wistful cornet than the jubilant cry of the friar of Assisi. In his renunciation Jammes is not ascetic; he loves all that makes his simple life joyful,—his pipe, his glass of wine, the dancing maids on the village green; it is even to enjoy them more relishingly that he has renounced the heart-poisoning ambition for 'success'. His solitude is filled, like Rousseau's, with a thousand simple but stirring emotions. He has Rousseau's sense of the soul in things. There is the old sideboard smelling of candle-grease and jam, a faithful servitor that will not steal. There is the old linen-chest, "which has heard the voice of my grand-aunts, which has heard the voice of my grandfather, which has heard the voice of my father, and is faithful to these memories. It is wrong to think that it knows only how to be silent, for I talk with it." Jammes loves to dream over in Arcadian reverie the days of his early childhood, making much of the grandfather who went to the West Indies, and dwelling upon certain female figures in the tenderest manner of the great Doctor of Sentiment. His favorite author is Rousseau; and his favorite book is the *Reveries*, "whose sweetness blends with

the sad quiet charm of the prairies, of river-banks haunted by the angelica, of deep woods where the oaks decay and mushrooms flourish. . . ."

In his early *Elegies* Jammes has produced a peculiarly appealing and romantic type of revery,—in which love and grief, gentle faith and memory, and the dreamy contemplation of nature, blend in a kind of general solution of wistful serenity, as of a restless and suffering heart fallen into peace at the sunset hour. The note of them all is sounded in the tenth of the series, in which the poet, tortured by the very intensity of love, and the suffering which lovers cause one another, yet comforts his beloved with a view of the grave beauty of life.

"Ne pleure pas, amie. La vie est belle et grave."

The first *Elegy* is addressed to his dead friend, Albert Samain. It is in no sense a lament for the departed poet. "Je ne regrette pas ta mort. Ta vie est là." The friend who remains takes pleasure in inviting the other to make him a visit in happy Orthez and in reviewing the simple joys they have shared there. He refers to his beautiful and enduring songs. And he *dreams*. He dreams of his friend, and of the twilight hour together at Orthez; he dreams of his native mountains, and of their walks at Versailles; he dreams of sheep and the pure void of the sky; of endless water and the clarity of fire; he dreams of his friend, he dreams of himself, and he dreams of God.

"Je songe à toi. Le jour baisse comme le jour
où je te vis dans mon vieux salon de campagne.
Je songe à toi. Je songe aux montagnes natales.
Je songe à ce Versailles où tu me promenas,
où nous disions des vers, tristes et pas à pas.
Je songe à ton ami et je songe à ta mère.
Je songe à ces moutons qui, au bord du lac bleu,
en attendant la mort bêlaient sur leur clarines.
Je songe à toi. Js songe au vide pur des cieux.
Je songe à l'eau sans fin, à la clarté des feux.
Je songe à la rosée qui brille sur les vignes.
Je songe à toi. Je songe à moi. Je songe à Dieu."

The religion of the *Elegies* and the *Fourteen Prayers* is not very specifically Catholic, not perhaps even Christian. Their philosophy is, like that of his still earlier poems, a kind of broad

and vague humanism, in the school of Rousseau and Bernadin de Saint-Pierre, whom he resembles in his naïveté, his vague goodness and loving tenderness for all of God's creatures,—his God being at that time very much the God of the "Confession de foi du vicaire savoyard." Slowly, however, he drew nearer the strict Catholic faith, partly under the influence of Charles Guérin, author of *Le Cœur solitaire* and *L'Homme intérieur*. Domestic sorrow, the betrayals and disillusionments of life, may have made him feel how little of a consoler in pain is the eloquent humanism which prays to a vague and impersonal God, omnipresent and yet elusive. In 1905, he submitted definitely to Roman Catholicism, and the immediate fruit of his conversion was a series of intimate religious poems, *L'Église habillée de feuilles*, in which the orthodox note is very clearly sounded. Much is made of the church and its exercises. The poet suffers now from a "nostalgie des cieux" of which we did not hear in his earlier poems; he feels that his body separates him from God, and that he must leave this flesh to be made free. He calls upon his guardian angel, whom he had neglected in the summer of his joy, in the pride of his body, in the days of his sweet dreaming. "I have lost the art of dreaming. Take my hand in thy hand!" One is reminded of Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty*, in which the English religious poet acknowledged that he had no longer felt strong enough to guide his life by the sole light of nature, but must resort to some external stay.

V.

Is he a modern? Is he a man of our times? Does he have something to say to us in a certain dialect, with a certain inflection, which we may recognize as ours and serving our need? Different readers will answer differently these extremely delicate questions, involving such difficulties of definition and classification. If one considers his technique, the deliberate freedom of his verse—his assonances for rhyme, his syllables left uncounted, his lines uncapitalized—one will answer at once: he *must* be a modern of the moderns, an innovator, a *révolté*. The same answer will probably be made in view of his daring naturalism, and even of the directness of his manner, his extreme informality. He is modern, and ultra-modern, in his avoidance of the 'literary'.

But then one begins to think of his return to the Middle Ages. After all, one says, he has nothing different to tell us from what good Catholics have always had to tell. He has renounced—in so far as he ever had it—the critical unrest of our time. Scientific facts do not disturb him. Will the flower be more beautiful because it has been classified in a system, or because we have studied the structure of its roots and leaves? Will that help us to understand the more essential question, *why flowers?* And philosophies? What philosophy gives peace? And social theories? What more can one demand of society than that it should give one a house, a mother, a dog, and blue water of the well? However modern in its form and manner, we say, his poetry reproduces, in spiritual content, the emotional states of an age when religion was in fullest flower. He is like one of those anonymous troubadours, with their simple canticles to the Virgin. Up they looked through all the circles of heaven, to God himself, bejewelled Emperor, in mantle of purple and gold, enthroned among all His orders of holy beings. And since the mediæval vision of life was a mystical synthesis, well-ordered in its complexity, since heaven and earth were spiritually interwoven, they showed a naïve familiarity with all things divine: the saints and the Holy Virgin were real protectors against material enemies and the assaults of the devil, needed intercessors at the court of the Eternal. Nature was a symbol, and the objects of this world were veils through which the eternal truths were felt and seen. The mediæval artists loved nature intensely, and pictured it minutely—witness the sculptured doorways of cathedrals or the paintings of Rogier van der Weyden—but it was a nature glorified by the mystical meaning which their piety read into it, their vision of what lay beyond. In his simple but intense mysticism, in his love for sanctified nature in all its forms, in his familiarity with things divine, Francis Jammes reminds us of some artist of the twelfth century.

But there again something pulls us up. What! we say, a twelfth-century vision of life at the end of the nineteenth, the beginning of the twentieth? What! in the twelfth century, a *prayer* "to be simple"! A prayer, even of St. Francis, "to go to heaven with the donkeys"! Does it not almost smack of the

satirist, Anatole France, and his court of heaven bewildered with the problem of baptized penguins? We do not have to go so far back as the Middle Ages for this cultivation of a democratic humility, this *tendre* for the underdog. Is it not quite recently that Vachel Lindsay of Illinois has sung the praises of the Negro and the grasshopper, and has shown us the social outcasts of our cities "entering into heaven" with General William Booth and his big bass drum?

And this mysticism of the unconscious, their escape into the subliminal, this soul-bath of revery, have we not found it in many profane writers throughout the past century, in the *Journal* of Amiel, in Richard Jefferies's *The Story of My Heart*, far enough removed from the spirit of the middle age? Is it not indeed one manifestation of the "maladie du siècle"? And, not confined to the nineteenth century, we find it in the poets characteristic of the present moment, in Carl Sandburg, who prays the mysterious "Bringers" to—

"Cover me over
In dusk and dust and dreams";

who, in words that might be straight out of the mouth of the French poet, prays the Lord:—

"To-day, let me be monosyllabic . . . a crony of old men
who wash sunlight in their fingers and
enjoy slow-pacing clocks."

The passion for simplifying art is but one phase of the passion for simplifying life,—which is modern enough in all conscience. We have met it in more and more striking guise in each of the successive schools of painting which have followed the Impressionists. In the very beautiful description, in *Jean de Noarrieu*, of the return of the shepherd with his sheep from the mountains, one is strongly reminded, in sentiment and detail, of various Post-Impressionist pictures:—

"Sous le troupeau ennuagé du ciel,
il conduisait le troupeau de la terre.
D'un geste large et rond il étendait
son long bâton, comme s'il bénissait
les brebis donneuses de laine et de lait.
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Et Jean pleura. Et les brebis boiteuses
penchaient la tête, sous le souffle de Dieu,
dans l'âcre automne aux rivières brumeuses."

Is it primitive art? Was Gauguin primitive in his return to Tahiti? Is Vachel Lindsay primitive in his return to the Congo? Were Matisse and Picasso really primitive?

What one recognizes in Jammes, as in these others, is the *cult* of the Primitive. And is not that the latest thing in all the arts?

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THE FINANCIAL REWARDS OF AMERICAN AUTHORS

A prominent magazine writer recently asserted that before the eighteenth century there was no known example of an author, other than a playwright, who lived entirely on the rewards of his literary labors. Great Britain has several examples to show of men who were living by their pens during that period, but not until the eighteenth century is lapsing into the nineteenth does America have a professional author, in the person of Jedidiah Morse, the "Father of American Geography." In 1784 Morse published *Geography Made Easy*, at New Haven, thus inaugurating that long series of text-books which by reason of their clearness and beauty have caused the American schoolboy to be envied by those of all other countries. Morse's book was the first of its character published in this country; and was so remunerative that by 1797 he had published three other works of the same general character. Morse had clearly discerned the needs of the aspiring young federation that in its newly won liberty regarded few things as impossible to the educated mind. The Revolution had created an insistent demand for American productions; and when the energies of the people were released from war and turned to the work of construction and reconstruction, there was a clamorous need for purely American books of an educational nature.

There were few men in those days who could write a successful text-book. Few of these looked with favor upon authorship of any sort, save perhaps the preparation of legal or of state papers. Others turned all their energies into purely economic channels. Morse has a strong competitor in Noah Webster for 'first' honors. Indeed, as Webster's *Speller* of classic memory was published in 1783 and has been called the first book published in the United States, Webster may be considered by some our first professional author. Webster at first dissipated his energies in more or less amateurish efforts in statecraft that can hardly be regarded as professional. Morse, on the other hand, concentrated his efforts on a series of works about geography, each of

which aided in selling the others. To Webster also finally came the recompense of his long efforts in behalf of American letters, but he waited longer than did his less discursive and less gifted contemporary.

Neither man, however, entered the realm of pure literature. They lived in a too practical age. Even had they turned to *belles-lettres*, they must have encountered two influences which would have rendered professional authorship in their day an almost hopeless venture. Not until 1891 is the American author freed from the menace of being undersold by books just as entertaining as his own. With the International Copyright Law of that year it was determined that our future poets and novelists should no longer be undersold, and in some cases actually forced from the markets, by the cheap pirated works of British authors. The other influence, although Webster himself fought ardently against it and measurably weakened its power, is discernible in some quarters to the present day. Long after we had acquired our political freedom we were still intellectually tributary to Great Britain. Indeed, so far as literature is concerned, it cannot be said that we had a well-defined national consciousness until far within the nineteenth century.

But when Charles Brockden Brown appeared with his *Alcuin* in 1797, what were the conditions awaiting the bold professional author who ventured for a living into the humanities? Emerson, according to the belief of many, first gave to the world an effective declaration of American intellectual independence in his *The American Scholar* of 1837. In reality, this address of Emerson is but the enduring form given by literary genius to many previous efforts of men to achieve an intellectual freedom that should measurably accord with our political one.

For more than a generation, however, these efforts represented the cause of a devoted few. Little did the average reader at the end of the eighteenth century perceive that independence of ideas and ideals is more necessary to true freedom than separate geographical boundaries. Moreover, much of the intellectual aristocracy of the young republic was as consciously Tory in its intellectual sympathies as had been Boucher, Galloway, and Leonard themselves. "An astonishing respect for

the arts and literature of their parent country, and a blind imitation of its manners, are still prevalent among the Americans," wrote Webster in 1789. Webster's entire life was much in the nature of a crusade against intellectual colonialism, a warfare in which he found aid from such men as Franklin, Belknap, Hazard, Freneau, Trumbull, and Neal. On the other hand, probably the most potent single force in determining the literary tastes of Americans during a large part of Webster's lifetime was exerted by Joseph Dennie, editor of the *Portifolio*, and generally it was used in a manner unfavorable to American authors. The larger towns of the period were usually fortresses of British subserviency, to be reduced only by long sieges.

It was such a pervasive atmosphere of literary subserviency that surrounded Freneau and makes us understand why, in disgust with the returns of authorship, he writes in the *Expedition of Timothy Taurus*:—

"Were this cartload of learning the whole that I knew,
I could sooner get forward by mending a shoe;
I could sooner grow rich by the axe or the spade,
Or thrive by the meanest mechanical trade.
The tinker himself would be richer than I,
For the tinker has something that people will buy."

In 1800 Brown declared that "Bookmaking is the dullest of all trades, and the utmost that any American can look for in his native country is to be reimbursed his unavoidable expenses." Brown, it will be remembered, was a novelist whose last work appeared in 1801, nine years before his death. Part of his failure to publish during that time may be ascribed to his physical condition; but when we consider the immense popularity of those best-sellers of his time, *Sandford and Merton* by Day; the gothic romances of Mrs Radcliffe; the sentimental ones of Mackenzie; *Coelebs in Search of a Wife*, by Mrs. More; and, most popular of all, Mrs. Roche's *Children of the Abbey*, we may well understand why Brown had such ill success financially. During his time we were yet waging a stern struggle against imperious material necessities; but had this, our first, man of pure letters been protected by an international copyright, in all probability his returns would have been fairly adequate, in spite of the distrust of the intellectually *élite* for American books.

One of our most prominent publishers wrote in 1819 that a general impression prevailed that we did not have and could never have a literature. It was, he said, positively injurious to the commercial credit of a bookseller to undertake American works "unless they might be Morse's *Geographies*, classical books, schoolbooks, Watts's *Psalms and Hymns*, or something of that class." Yet regardless of this knowledge and against the advice of several booksellers, he published Trumbull's poems the next year. The author received \$1,000 and 100 copies. When the account was closed, the publisher was out just \$1,000, a sum which he philosophically charges to the patriotic attempt to encourage American literature.

Under the combined influences of indifference to nationalism and national ideals in literature, colonial subserviency, and the failure of legal protection for American books against those of Europe, so doubtful had become the financial reward for American authorship that in 1820 Charles Wiley, one of the most prominent publishers of New York, told the poet Halleck that he was the only writer in America, Irving excepted, whose works he would risk publishing. Halleck's case offers a good opportunity to gauge the returns of literature from about 1820 to 1865. He was a man of remarkable talent, yet fairly representative of his period. *The Croaker Papers* had made him famous. So popular was he, indeed, that his publisher made him the offer, highly generous for the time, of \$500 for another canto of *Fanny*. Between his first and his last book of importance stretches a period of forty-six years, during which his pen was always busy. Yet the entire returns of his literary lifetime were but \$17,500. In the very middle of this period, 1844, Whipple, once famous in American criticism, writes: "The least lucrative profession in the United States is that of authorship. Every prudent man avoids it as he does a pestilence. A writer who attempts to live on the manufactures of his imagination is continually coquetting with starvation."

Irving had to meet just such conditions as Halleck. By 1842, Irving was practically driven from the market. He received a larger income for a time from the sales of his books in Great Britain than from the American sales. Then Bohn, of London,

began to pirate his works, and his legitimate publishers finally gave up the field to him. The demand for his writings had ceased, Irving was told by his Philadelphia publishers in 1846. G. P. Putnam took up his works about this time, however, and succeeded not only in making them pay, but in inducing Irving to leave his desk in the law office of his brother once more to take up authorship. "There is no necessity, John," he said to his brother, "for my bothering further with the law. Here is a fool of a publisher going to give me a thousand dollars a year for doing nothing."

It must have been some knowledge of Irving's experience and of literary conditions in general that caused the apparent modesty of Bryant in 1823. When asked to name his price for contributions to *The United States Literary Gazette*, he suggested two dollars each as a fair amount. He was made and accepted an offer of two hundred dollars a year for an average of one hundred lines a month. Is there any wonder that he so far descended from his Jove-like dignity as to write, apropos of his new position on the staff of *The New York Evening Post*, that "politics and a bellyful are better than poetry and starvation"? It has been asserted, and with apparent correctness, that when Bryant came to New York no writers other than editors were living by their pens. Halleck was in business. Drake was a physician, as was also that most erratic of geniuses, Percival, while Sands was a lawyer. Verplanck, Irving, and Cooper had some private means.

Perhaps even as early as 1820 New England had produced, in the person of John Neal, an author who was making a fair living by his pen. At least Goodrich, whose knowledge of American literature was, for his day, phenomenal, said that he succeeded in supporting himself "very handsomely" by his literary labors. Now Neal was born at Portland, Maine, as was Longfellow. If Neal found literature such a paying profession, why was the elder Longfellow so averse to his son's pursuit of it? When the future poet asked, in 1824, for a graduate year at Harvard, his father answered: "There is not wealth enough in this country to afford encouragement and patronage to merely literary men." The reply was but part—a small part—of the

truth. Americans were buying enough books of *belles-lettres* to have rendered a literary life profitable to our author; but they were the works of foreign writers, in most cases, upon which no copyright duty had to be paid. Moreover, their popularity had already been tested abroad, and a good seller in Great Britain was likely to have a large sale in this country. A publisher risked nothing in republishing the works of Scott, for example, because, writes one publisher, "the appearance of a new tale from his pen caused a greater sensation in the United States than did some of the battles of Napoleon, which decided the fates of thrones and empires."

It was the popularity of Scott, Miss Porter, Mrs. Roche, Mrs. More, Miss Edgeworth, and other pirated transatlantic authors as much as the lack of wealth and provincial catering to European critical opinion that motivated the classical example of the nadir of our literary self-respect. When Cooper first came before the American public it was as a would-be novelist of British life. To him it appeared that in 1820 there was no hope for a purely American novel. His publishers seemed to agree with him the next year, when he wrote *The Spy*. To reassure their nervousness, Cooper wrote the last part of this book before he had even mapped out the bulk of it.

One reason why our early writers obtained such meagre rewards for their literary efforts is that they were unwilling to advertise themselves. The distaste for receiving money for work in *belles-lettres* which Byron voiced in Europe was not unknown in America. Cooper's first novel appeared anonymously. Halleck seemed entirely indifferent to literary fame or financial reward. Up to 1839 he did not place his name on a single contribution to the press nor upon the title-page of any of his published volumes. Percival was not merely giving voice to his own eccentricity, then, when he wrote in 1822: "I know of no more contemptible being than an author who writes for money. He converts the only shrine where the mind can find a sure asylum into a huckster's shop. If I must labour for subsistence, I will not labour with my pen, particularly when I am paid at a meaner rate than a shoeblack."

Yet Cooper, before he began to quarrel with the American public, was, in spite of his many failures, fairly well paid. In

fact, one contemporary novelist was so generously rewarded that the gentle Longfellow voices his disgust. In 1838 he writes of Professor Ingraham that "he is tremendous—really tremendous. I think he may say that he writes the worst novels ever written by anybody. But they sell; he gets twelve hundred dollars apiece."

Only the next year Longfellow has to accept three hundred and seventy-five dollars for *Hyperion* and to comfort himself with the fact that the book was well printed and widely circulated. Trowbridge records from memory a conversation which he once had with him after fairly modern prices began to prevail for literary productions. Longfellow could never, he declared, get over the feeling that one hundred dollars was a large amount to receive for a poem of perhaps not over half as many lines. At Trowbridge's demurral, Longfellow replied that had his friend written as many poems for three and five dollars each as he had, Trowbridge would think so too. *The Psalm of Life* was sold to *Knickerbocker's Magazine*, in 1838, for three dollars. In a few years, however, through the agency of Samuel Ward in New York, Longfellow was enabled to obtain from fifteen to twenty dollars for his poems, "really a dazzling price in those days." *The Hanging of the Crane* was sold to the *New York Ledger* in 1873. The negotiations were lengthy. Finally Bonner, "the Barnum of Publishers," paid Longfellow three thousand dollars for these two hundred lines and gave Ward one third as much for his mediation. Afterwards when the poem appeared in book form, it had an immense sale. Trowbridge asserts that for its length it was the best paid piece of literary work ever produced.

Yet Longfellow could hardly grow rich from the returns of one poem. In the second quarter of the last century Willis and Prescott were the two authors who were the most consistently rewarded for their work. Barnes, Stephens, and Anthon had incomes equal to either of these, but they were writers or editors of text-books or works of reference. When Willis boasted to Longfellow of making ten thousand dollars a year, the latter wished that he himself had made as many hundred.

In 1842 Higginson records in his diary a conversation which he had had with Ellery Channing, who thought, incorrectly, that

Hawthorne was the only man in America that was supporting himself by his pen. Possibly Channing was right if he meant that Hawthorne alone was making a living out of pure literature as distinct from journalism. Hawthorne, he continues, was paid more for his magazine articles than anyone else except Willis, who, because of his phenomenal popularity at this period, could get five dollars a page at times and as high as fifty dollars for an article. In this same year Lowell thought he might safely calculate upon earning four hundred dollars a year by his writings. Hawthorne's income was really small, and he published many little masterpieces through the periodicals of the day, before they paid him at all adequately or before he ceased to be "the obscurest man-of-letters in America."

Two years later, in 1844, Prescott wrote to an English correspondent that the compensation of the *North American Review* was only a dollar a printed page, although a popular writer could sometimes command twice that amount by contracting for a certain number of pages a year.

Why was it that the magazines of the forties and fifties did not pay better? There was public wealth enough to have supported them, and in all probability there was as much interest in literature as at the present time, population considered. The true explanation lies in the formidable competition which the publishers of legitimate magazines had to encounter from those that had stolen their contents from European writers. The publishers of magazines won a more brilliant victory over the evils attendant on piracy than did the book publishers, but their fight was scarcely less strenuous.

A day of ill omen for the purse of the American literary man it was when the *Great Western* and the *Sirius*, the first steamers to cross the Atlantic entirely by steam, arrived at New York, on the same day, in 1838. In that eager age of reading and of yearning for the latest European success, the possibility of making journalism of literature was not overlooked. The closeness of communication brought about by steam made it feasible. In our great publishing centres, mammoth journals, stuffed with the spoils of transatlantic literature, began to spring up. Writers everywhere were disgusted with the infamous condition of the

copyright laws. Just what was the state of publishing ethics in those days is vividly illustrated for us by Willis in a prospectus for a new magazine sent out Christmas Eve, 1838. In *The Pirate* he intends, he says, "to take advantage of the privilege assured to us by our piratical law of copyright; and in the name of American authors (for our own benefit) 'convey' to our columns the cream and spirit of everything that ventures to light in France, England, and Germany. As to original American productions, we shall, as the publishers do, take what we can get for nothing (that is good), holding, as the publishers do, that while we can get Boz and Bulwer for a thank-ye or less, it is not pocket-wise to pay much for Halleck and Irving."

It is true that Willis started his magazine partly in protest against the copyright laws and in a measure as an object lesson. Nevertheless, that one of the most popular writers in America thus dared to hoist the black flag and thereby lost none of his popularity shows the deplorable conditions existing in the literary world of those days. The *Brother Jonathan* and the *New World* were two prominent paste-and-scissors, "thank-ye-or-less" journals which sprang up in the wake of the *Great Eastern*. In one issue they sometimes published complete novels, copies of which they had met an incoming steamer to procure, as soon as they could be rushed into print. The price was as low as ten cents, and occasionally lower.

Yet in spite of such conditions, Willis seems to have been fairly well paid. His magazine ran less than a year, but during its brief life he had arranged for the publication of three books, his royalty to be twenty per cent., with two thousand dollars on account in advance. To most Americans of the period, sales of their books in Europe, if they sold there at all, brought little; but Willis is an example to the contrary. He was known personally in Great Britain, and his works circulated fairly well there. Longmans offered him two hundred pounds for *Romance of Travel*, if published in advance of the American edition. On the last day of 1839, he wrote that his literary receipts in England would amount to \$7,500. When in 1841 he received fifty dollars a page for a contribution of four pages to Godey's *Lady's Book*, the height of extravagance had been reached, his

contemporaries thought. The regular prices for the *Lady's Book*, established in 1830, and *Graham's Magazine*, 1841, were twelve dollars a page in the forties. "The burst on authorland of *Graham's* and *Godey's*," wrote Willis, "was like a sunrise without a dawn." *The Reminiscences of a Journalist*, by C. T. Congdon, says that Willis was the first magazine writer who was fairly well paid. At one time in the early forties he was writing four articles monthly for as many different magazines and getting one hundred dollars for each.

But down to fairly modern times, Willis stands as one of the three or four best paid of American authors, when we take fully into account the income derived from continuous literary activity over a long period of years. Especially is this the case when we consider the ability displayed. He is an illuminating example of the utmost that could be achieved during his literary lifetime, the third, fourth, and fifth decades of the last century, by a facile, popular writer gifted with an extraordinary journalistic instinct and a remarkable social appeal that could commercialize itself in advertising.

Yet the American people were not paying their men of letters of that period for frothy amusement alone. Probably the staid historian Prescott found literature as remunerative in the end as did Willis. Americans should be especially proud of the achievement of Prescott. We might naturally, of course, be supposed to write our own history better than could an outsider; and as long as America remained a land of beckoning promise and of political presage, European immigrant and statesman alike might well be expected to read that history. Again, our second war with Great Britain and the later spectacular successes of our mercantile marine, together with immigration inimical to England, the harsh criticism of British writers, and our own astonishing internal expansion, had engendered a certain amount of self-esteem within us that might well be called over-complacent in many cases. We were ready, then, gladly to acclaim every historian who confirmed our views of our own importance. And equally were we ready to denounce any Cooper, and refuse to buy his books, who questioned it. Under these circumstances, surely the chances for one of our authors to write books upo

European history that would pay him well in Europe might seem to be slight. Yet the genius of Prescott accomplished this.

The English rights to *The Conquest of Peru* were bought by Bentley for four thousand dollars. In 1854 Routledge offered the author one thousand pounds each for as many volumes, not exceeding six, as he chose to write of *The Reign of Philip II*, provided he could give a good copyright. International copyright was then being discussed in the House of Lords. In case there were no adequate protective laws, the publishers offered five hundred pounds for the two first volumes and half that sum for each of the following. Here is a concrete example of what an international copyright meant in money in those days to American writers. Moreover, it leaves entirely too favorable an impression. Prescott was already an established author, a position he had been able to reach partly through inherited wealth and his consequent ability to publish and market his first work. When an author of undeveloped or less aggressive genius could not do this, he ran a very grave risk of remaining forever silent. How many such there are in the course of American history before 1891, only the Recording Angel of Unfulfilled Renown can ever reveal.

Prescott sold his *The Conquest of Mexico* to the Harpers from plates provided by himself. For five thousand copies, they paid him \$7,500 in cash—"an enormous price," the author writes enthusiastically. These same publishers, who, about this period, had a worldwide reputation for the immense volume of their business, gave him \$7,500 in cash on the day of publication for as many copies of *The Conquest of Peru*. These terms, according to Ticknor, were "more liberal than had ever been offered for a work of grave history on this side of the Atlantic." As early as 1846 the Harpers estimated the copyrights of Prescott to be worth \$25,000 each, while the author says that he had already received about \$30,000 on the two histories. His works are but five in number, *Ferdinand and Isabella*, 1837; *The Conquest of Mexico*, 1843; *Biographical and Critical Miscellanies*, 1845; *The Conquest of Peru*, 1847; and *The Reign of Philip II*, 1855-58. By the time of the appearance of this last work, Prescott had a remarkable popularity. He had again returned to Boston

for a publisher, for he was a keen man of business, not unwilling to play off one firm against another. He writes that he is to receive \$6,000 for each of the two volumes of *Philip* and \$6,000 a year for six consecutive years for the right to publish three thousand copies of each of his other historical works. Six months after *Philip* appeared, Prescott is able to record that he has received \$17,000 in the last half year from his Boston publishers. These sums, however, do not represent clear profit, for Prescott must have been at considerable expense in collecting his material.

Here, then, is the very best that a genius could hope to do financially in sustained and earnest years of literary endeavor before the appearance of the modern popular novelist. True, there are examples of large sums made through literature, but they are more or less isolated cases. Bonner, ardent speculator in literary values, estimated in 1868 that Henry Ward Beecher's name had an advertising value of \$20,000. The hopeless novel *Norwood* was the result. In the same way the fames of Grant, Sherman and several Arctic and African explorers were capitalized in book form for large sums. Mrs. Stowe is not a real exception, since she remains for all practical purposes the author of one book. Nor can the sales of Prescott's works be altogether attributed to their sheer literary merit. The intense interest in Mexican affairs caused by the war for Texan independence must have sold many copies of *The Conquest of Mexico*, as Irving knew it would when he himself prepared to write upon the same subject. The kaleidoscopic political changes in which Spain, her colonies or late colonies in South America, and our own Monroe Doctrine figured largely, must have aided the sales of all his other books.

A few years before the middle of the last century, two aspects highly comforting to the financial hopes of the American author begin to make themselves apparent. When, in the wake of the *Great Eastern*, with its comparatively cheap and quick communication with Europe, there sprang up a crop of mammoth weeklies that printed a complete novel of Dickens, Marryat, Bulwer-Lytton, or James in one issue and sold it for a dime, the legitimate publishing houses found themselves engaged in a

desperate strife. Their only recourse was to print and sell more cheaply than the pirates. Having a better financial basis, they finally managed so to undersell their rivals that they were largely driven from the market. But during this bitter struggle, what was happening to American authors? Cooper—and he suffered less than most—writes indignantly to his Philadelphia publishers about the small returns from his works. More than once do they explain to the irate author that to meet the chaotic and depressed state of the publishing business they have been “*compelled*” to reduce prices.

After the pirates had been in some measure driven to cover, there ensued a period of “gentlemanly understanding” whereby the arrangements of a publisher with a foreign author were usually respected. Although cases of infringement repeatedly occurred, yet the comparative stability of the market was a great aid to our struggling authors. The Civil War, with its necessary economic readjustment, again destroyed the good feeling which had been growing up among the publishers. Again chaos came, and again American literary rewards ebbed to an extremely low point.

But for more than a decade before the war and synchronous with the best period of “gentlemanly understanding,” the long struggle for nationalism in American literature was won. True, some remained who regarded lightly any literary production emanating from their own authors. But even among the social and intellectual self-elect their number had so diminished that the pocket-books of our men of letters did not seriously feel their presence. In this twofold victory over pirates and colonial subserviency, even though it be not complete in either case, may be discovered principles which critics would do well to ponder. It is not mere chance that these twenty years or so form the classic age of American literature.

Let it not be understood, however, that the returns to our authors were at all commensurate with their ability as measured by standards existing since 1891. The case was far otherwise, in spite of what Goodrich, the publisher, wrote in 1856: “Nothing is now more marketable than good writing—at least in this country—whatever may be its form: poetry or prose, fact or fiction, reason or romance. If an author is poorly paid, it is

because he writes poorly. I do not think, indeed, that authors are adequately paid, for authorship does not stand on a level with other professions as to pecuniary recompense, but it is certain that a clever, industrious, and judicious writer may make his talent the means of living."

Even with his last sentence, the views of Goodrich are not lacking in optimism. Horace Greeley, speaking apparently about 1870, says that the publishers of 1850 paid hardly a tithe of the prices then accorded favorite authors. Yet both men were right. If prices in 1870 were much higher than in 1850, so too were those of 1856 measurably in advance of rewards that prevailed in 1836. This, however, is merely stating the matter comparatively. Few more pathetic sentences have come down to us from men of genius than these three from Hawthorne in 1849. When he had lost his position in the Custom House at Salem he came home to his wife to say: "I have lost my place. What shall we now do for bread?" And to a friend he writes: "Do not think anything too humble to be mentioned to me."

Emerson in 1849 was having an even harder time with the financial side of literature than was Hawthorne. "Emerson told me in 1849," says Hale, "that he had never then received a dollar for any of his published works." He had been given some copies of his own books, and that was all. One is reminded in this connection of Thoreau's library of "nearly nine hundred volumes, over seven hundred of which I wrote myself." The entire proceeds of Emerson's literary life were only about thirty thousand dollars, and a little of this, despite Hale's statement, had reached him before 1846.

As already noted, Godey's *Lady's Book* and *Graham's Magazine* were offering noteworthy financial opportunity to American authorship in the forties. Other magazines followed, and although they did not maintain the pace set by either of these or by Bonner in his *Ledger*, yet they were a great improvement financially upon such prices as the *North American Review* had been offering. After the establishment of *Graham's Magazine* in 1841 there was a considerable interval before the appearance of another periodical that was to contribute noteworthy to the financial rewards of American authorship. Then came *Harper's New*

Monthly Magazine in 1850; *Putnam's Monthly Magazine*, 1853; *Harper's Weekly*, 1856; *The Atlantic Monthly*, 1857; *Scribner's Monthly*, 1870 (*The Century Magazine* after 1881); and *Scribner's Magazine*, 1887; names which link us with the past and are potent factors in our literature to-day. It was of these magazines, save the last one, that the Boston publisher, Mr. Dana Estes, was thinking when he testified before the Senate Committee on Patents in 1886: "I have returned many scores, if not hundreds, of manuscripts of American authors, unopened even, simply from the fact that it is impossible to make the books of most American authors pay, unless they are first published and acquire recognition through the columns of the magazines." Mr. Estes's dismal testimony came at the period when piracy had reached its second high-water mark, largely because, says Mr. Henry Holt in 1888, of the release of so much manufacturing energy after the war. Mr. Holt believes that the decline in our literature in the seventies and eighties from its brilliancy during the age of Hawthorne and Longfellow is largely traceable to the inadequate returns to authorship in those days of aggressive piracy.

Yet the pathway of the magazines was not always rose-strewn. Even one destined to such prominence in after days as the *Atlantic Monthly* had to go slowly at first. Lowell, the editor, wrote concerning four poems Emerson had sent him in 1857: "When I spoke of printing all four I was perhaps greedy, and Mr. Underwood says we can't afford it, reckoning each as a separate poem—which means giving \$50 apiece for them." In a letter to a discontented contributor he says: "Six dollars a page is more than can be got elsewhere, and we pay only ten to folks whose *names* are worth the other four."

The *Atlantic* passed into the hands of Ticknor and Fields in 1859, and Fields later became the editor. He introduced a new practice,—that of payment upon acceptance. He was especially liberal toward those young authors who had not yet acquired "names" to sell. He even sometimes advanced money on articles still to be written, and was known to raise his price when he learned that the contributor particularly needed money, especially in the case of a woman.

It was well for Lowell that he had editorships and a professorship. His returns from literary work were at first very meagre. In 1870 he is able to say that he has lately declined an offer of four thousand dollars a year to write four pages monthly. He speaks in 1887 of his general copyright being worth two thousand dollars a year. "Not much after fifty years of authorship, but enough to keep me from the almshouse." It must not be forgotten, however, that in the cases of Lowell, Irving, Bancroft, Motley, Hawthorne, Taylor and others, literary rewards came indirectly through political appointments.

Not such was the case of Whittier, who, save Poe and some of the Southern authors after the war, had a more protracted struggle with poverty than any other of our classic writers. Whittier's activities as an abolitionist greatly diminished his popularity as an author. That is the chief reason why he is forced to remark during the war that the doors of most magazines and publishing-houses had been closed to him for twenty years. After more than twenty-six years of authorship, he writes to the editor of the *Atlantic* in 1857, who apparently had asked him what he expected for his contribution, that for *Skipper Ireson's Ride*, the poem in question, he could get fifty dollars elsewhere. But he adds, doubtfully: "It is not worth it, perhaps." His first marked success did not come until *Snow-Bound* was published in 1866. Before that time his work had been done under depressing circumstances; for, unlike Longfellow, he had no private means.

When one approaches the twentieth century, he passes rapidly from facts that make history to guesses that make gossip. He may pause, however, to note Bayard Taylor's discussion of royalties. In 1865 he writes: "The publishers seem to consider ten per cent. on the retail price as a sort of *par*, above which they only allow an author to rise when he is sufficiently popular to enforce better terms. This, of course, is considerably less than half profits (in ordinary times), which ought to be the standard. Mr. Putnam estimates that twelve and one-half per cent. is about equivalent to half profits, and Mr. Irving and myself accepted this estimate, the publisher paying for the plates and owning them." Although Taylor was able about this time to secure a

royalty of fourteen per cent., yet in 1873 he is forced to write that for two years past he had received no income of any sort from property or copyrights.

The spectacular financial successes in American literature since 1891 have usually been won through the novel. What a far cry it is from the unending flood of fiction that now deluges us to the day in 1836 when Bryant wrote that the literary world was running very much to novels. "Here are three in one week." A prominent publisher writing well within this century says that there are possibly a dozen American novelists who have large incomes from their work, while many more have comfortable ones. None of them, however, he asserts, has found authorship so lucrative as the writers of gossip for the literary journals would have us believe. It may be true that *Richard Carvel* brought the author "first and last as a book and as a play," \$300,000, and that Mr. Dixon realized \$245,000 from *The Clansman*. Equally true it may be that \$5,000, as much as Poe received for all his short stories, has been paid for a single short story of as many words, and that one publication has an unalterable minimum of five cents a word for what fiction it uses.

If these figures be correct, all prosperous authors of our day should indeed be thankful that they were not contemporaries of Charles Brockden Brown, in whose time an American novel was regarded with suspicion, not to say contempt. What would have been their fate when Irving was driven from the market, and Scott in pirated editions sold at one-tenth the British price? Thankful, also, they ought to be that they did not, as did Bayard Taylor, have to face the second blossoming period of piracy. They should review that long bitter fight from 1837 to 1891 that in most cases made their success possible. And they should be grateful to those men, Matthews, G. P. Putnam, Bryant, Gay, Stedman, W. H. Appleton and others, who finally won the battle for right, often desperate though it seemed, which was to establish, as Lowell put it, that "there is one thing better than a cheap book, and that is a book honestly come by."

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THE RELIGION OF EMERSON

Frequently we can consider a man's politics, his business, his art, apart from his religion; but to speak of Emerson's religion as an aspect of his soul apart from other aspects is utterly to misconceive him. Religion permeated everything Emerson ever thought or did; it was not a function of his soul,—it *was* his soul. Emerson was the sage essayist only as he was a religious sage, an orator only as he was a religious oracle, a philosopher only as he was a prophet, a poet only as he was a priest.

To sum Emerson's uttered religion, therefore, would mean to sound the deeps of Emerson's soul as expressed by his every word of prose or verse. Even then his real religion is not fathomed. All his writings represent the struggle to utter a religion that he could never set forth with human symbols. Emerson would have been the first to acknowledge that, in his lifelong attempt to express his religion to the world, he had most signally failed. Looked at from this aspect, all his works appear a gigantic tragedy. Here is a soul that has tried to reveal itself aright,—a soul that exults, that cries aloud in despair, that utters strange paradoxes and startling epigrams; a soul that is transfigured with rhapsodies; whose thought leaps from peak to peak of aspiration like the play of lightnings; a soul that sings with the ancient murmur of the sea, that lashes itself with contradictions, that through it all smiles like the sun,—and yet remains triumphantly unexpressed to the last.

Despairing of any orderly arrangement of his religious thought, and conscious that it could not be upheld by the logic of the schools, Emerson quietly admitted that he is as one "seeing what he can, and simply telling what he sees." Mindful of the contradictions in which his utterances involved him, he becomes champion of the royal virtue of honest inconsistency, and patiently says to those demanding systematized doctrine: "It is too young by some ages yet to form a creed."

But the very thing which constitutes the failure of Emerson's religious expressions is that which lends them their greatest fascination. It is just because Emerson's writings are always

fluid and suggestive rather than final, that they are so profoundly religious. To suggest the infinite in conduct is religious living; to suggest the infinite in literary form is the loftiest religious art. Emerson's sentences suggest the infinite even if they do not reveal it. Books never do that. The soul can never read or write itself into the eternal,—there it can only live itself.

For nineteen hundred years at least religion has centred itself about the ideas of God, the soul, freedom and immortality; so that the most natural way to discuss Emerson's religion is to consider his attitude toward these standard themes of Christendom. This method of approaching his religion is especially commendable when we remember that Emerson had so vital a message in relation to all these topics that he quite transformed their meaning. In dealing with Emerson the Religious Teacher, then, we shall be dealing with Emerson the Reformer,—in some ways a Luther of this Western world,—whose protestantism was not directed against sundry popes but against sundry parchments, whose shibboleth was the inspired words of Concord or of any other place where there are souls that see.

First, then, what was Emerson's God?

Much that is characteristic in Emerson's religion was the direct result of his idea of deity. When he first began to express himself on this subject, men were at a loss whether to call him an atheist or a pantheist. Atheist we now know he was not. If not quite pantheistic, his idea of God, especially as expressed in the essay on *The Oversoul*, is so nearly pantheism that it would not be incorrect to call him a pantheist. Here he tells us that "there is no bar or wall in the soul where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins." He insists that God is not far off, but omnipresent; that "one blood rolls uninterruptedly in endless circulation through all men, as the water of the globe is all one sea, and, truly seen, its tide is one." If the Jew of Amsterdam, the great Spinoza, could be called "God-intoxicated" for his pantheism, so likewise could this seer of Concord.

What is especially interesting in Emerson's God-concept is that it is essentially Oriental rather than Christian. With him,

as with the Asiatic worshipper, God's will is supreme—so supreme over the wills of men that Emerson explicitly says that none of us can wrong the universe, even if he would. It sounds almost like the fatalistic oracle of an Eastern sacred book to hear Emerson saying: "It is not mine or thine, but the will of all mind. A breath of will blows eternally through the universe of souls in the direction of the Right and Necessary."

With such an idea of God, the only thing apparently left for man is to submit to this all-inclusive deity as speedily as possible. "Virtue," says Emerson, "is the adopting of this dictate of the universal mind by the individual will. Character is the habit of this obedience, and religion is the accompanying emotion of reverence which the presence of the universal mind ever excites in the individual."

Emerson did not look upon this submission to the will of God as a tyranny, but rather as sweetest harmony. Indeed, it is not so much submission to God as concord with God. Only when a man becomes at peace with God does wisdom dawn upon him for the first time; and then it comes as an inspiration. His whole life is gradually transformed. "When a man lives with God," says Emerson, "even his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn."

If any man ever prayed without ceasing in the deepest sense, it was Emerson; and yet he has not very much to say about "talking to God". Indeed, with him, prayer was not so much a speaking unto God as a listening to God's voice; or, as it is expressed in the essay on *Self-Reliance*: "Prayer is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view. It is the soliloquy of a beholding and jubilant soul."

Fortunately or unfortunately, contemporary laymen were so vague in their ideas of God as to find comparatively little fault with Emerson's rapt and mystic devotions. But when they heard his answer to that immemorial question, "What think ye of Christ?" they were filled with concern. Not that Emerson belittled the Nazarene. He says eloquently in his Divinity School Address of 1838: "Jesus Christ belonged to the true race of prophets. He saw with open eye the mystery of the soul." Indeed, he went so far as to exclaim that Jesus was the only soul

in all history who really appreciated the worth of man. But Emerson could not accept the doctrine of any unique divinity for him, and disallowed the miracles. Touching the atonement he said that nothing can bring the individual peace but himself,—nothing but the triumph of principles can give permanent peace. He even went so far as to declare that the history of Jesus is only the history of every man written large, and implied that there are more and better Messiahs to come. Dr. Robertson Nicoll thought that special stress ought to be laid on Emerson's expectation of a Messiah. He wrote: "Emerson's attitude was almost Jewish. A Messiah was due from God. He would probably be an American Messiah. America must not miss him." Indeed, while finding some fault with the fragmentary and partial character of the Bible, Emerson prophetically cried: "I look for the hour when that supreme Beauty which ravished the souls of those Eastern men, and chiefly of those Hebrews, and through their lips spoke oracles to all time, shall speak in the West also."

Loving the character of Jesus as he did, however, Emerson did not fail to pay supreme tribute to the law of loving as the one thing which can never be transcended; as that which, if carried out, "would put a new face on this weary old world."

Through Emerson and other reformers like him a thought has developed which has completely transfigured the religion of the Western world. I refer to the disputed relation between religion and right conduct. World-old was the supposition that one may be moral and yet not be religious. Centuries old was the counter-plea that morality is religion. Immanuel Kant, who was Emerson's philosophical preceptor, had shown that to be good and to be religious is one and the same thing; and this was the plea of Emerson's gospel in song, in essay and in life until he was laid to rest under that mountain rock. His most indignant objection to the religion of his day was that it should even dream of divorcing itself from morality. He commended Theodore Parker most of all for insisting that the very essence of Christianity is practical morals. "Morality on fire with emotion"—that is what religion meant to him. "Mere morality!" some of the theologians exclaim: but back comes Emerson's keen thrust:

"Men talk of 'mere morality',—which is much as if one should say, 'Poor God, with nobody to help Him!'" With him the "commanding fact" never to be lost sight of is the "utter sufficiency of the moral sentiment." He exclaims, in his essay on *Poetry*: "The moral law lies at the centre of nature and radiates to the circumference. It is the pith and marrow of every substance, every relation and every process." He felt, and repeatedly proclaimed that "the sentiment of virtue is the essence of all religion," and hailed with joy the fact that the mind of his age was gradually "falling away from theology to morals." He thought that, after all, "sensible men and conscientious men all over the world were of one religion,—the religion of well-doing and daring."

As to just what being moral is, Emerson is, fortunately, quite precise. He agreed with Marcus Aurelius and with Kant that "He is moral whose aim or motive may become a universal rule, binding on all intelligent beings." "He is immoral who is acting to any merely private end." And here we come to Emerson's essential democracy of spirit,—he believes that all virtues are perfectly natural to all souls, when once awakened; that the government of God is not through hierarchies and religious tyrannies, but simply and grandly does the "Divine Nature carry on its administration by good men," wherever or whoever they may be.

With such views as these, it is not hard to see that Emerson was considered a heretic by the church of his day. The Unitarian Church seemed to him the broadest of all and he went so far as to enter its ministry. Yet in after time he liked to say that if even 'that church had examined him, they would probably not have let him preach at all.' Here was a man who protested that the reliance on authority means the decline of religion,—the withdrawal of the soul; a man who was imprudent enough to say that "the religion of one age is the literary entertainment of the next." Was this a religious anarchist who could without fear announce that "the highest virtue is always against the law" and that "whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist," even that the very "truth and hope of any time must always be sought in the minorities"? Yes, a religious anarchist was this

Emerson, but the gentlest anarchist of all time; a reformer so gentle that it could be said of him that he was "an iconoclast without a hammer, who took down our idols from their pedestals so tenderly that it seemed like an act of worship."

Yet, none the less truly, he did take down the idols. He conceived the universe as a divine incarnation and so was an optimist; but this meant the downfall of Calvinism for him. "We are built on Christ," said the churches of his day. "Ah, no," answered Emerson; "the idioms of Jesus's language and the figures of his rhetoric have usurped the place of his truth; and churches are not built on his principles, but on his tropes." "Oh, but you do not believe in miracles!" said the church; and Emerson smilingly rejoins: "The true miracle is the Christ-life, and I believe in that. The word Miracle, as pronounced by the churches, gives a false impression: it is Monster. It is not one with the blowing clover and the falling rain."

At the age of twenty-nine Emerson was constrained to leave the pulpit of the church he loved most, because he could not conscientiously administer a form in the name of religion, and as a free soul was not afraid to state his honest thought in the matter. Perhaps it was better for the race, after all, that Emerson was taken from the church and given to the world in a still wider sense, as a man of letters. "Ceasing to write sermons," says Garnett, "he began unconsciously to write scriptures."

And yet Emerson believed in the church,¹ and once at least hinted at what he thought would be its nature. "It will be," he says, "a church which will have heaven and earth for its beams and rafters; science for symbol and illustration; it will fast enough gather beauty, music, picture, poetry. Was never stoicism so stern and exigent as this shall be. It shall send man home to his central solitude, shame these social, supplicating manners. He shall expect no coöperation, he shall walk with no companion. The nameless thought, the nameless Power, the super-personal Heart,—he shall repose on that."

Emerson believed that the church of the future will be intellectual, and that, above all, it will grant reasonable freedom to

¹ Cf. the opening lines of *The Problem*.

the souls that compose it. A church of such independent souls rouses him to an enthusiasm which rapturously exclaims:—

“Oh, what is Heaven but the fellowship
Of minds that each can stand against the world
By its own meek and incorruptible will?”

I have already hinted that Emerson is not always consistent in his religious statements; and now, in speaking of the soul as independent and “free” we are brought face to face with the main contradiction of Emerson’s religion,—the irreconcilable contradiction between his idea of God and his idea of the human soul. He conceives God as being all, as permeating all, as planning and purposing through all. But if God be all, what room is there left for you and me as free beings in Emerson’s extreme sense? If you are but an expression of the divine, where is there left any moral responsibility for you? If God *be* all, God *does* all,—and the individual can only wait for God to do with him as he will; nay, he cannot even wait unless God will it. For I, the Soul, am merged in the “Oversoul”, and the Oversoul is all in all.

And in many passages, Emerson seems to accept these consequences of his idea of God. In the essay on *Spiritual Laws* he does not hesitate to declare that “a higher law than that of our will regulates events; our painful labors are unnecessary and fruitless; only in our easy and simple, spontaneous action are we strong, and by contenting ourselves with obedience we become divine.” And again: “All reform aims in some particular to let the great soul have its way through us; in other words to engage us to obey.”

All this would logically do away with any real freedom for human souls; and yet Emerson majestically sets aside all logic and presents the Occidental side of the matter as earnestly as the Oriental, and seems to believe them both profoundly. The Occidental—the distinctively Western view,—that for which Christianity has preëminently stood, is the independent value of the individual soul. But if this be truth, God must not be regarded as all in Emerson’s compulsive sense. Strange to say, however, Emerson always clings to the Oriental idea of God as

"all", while proclaiming the Western idea of the might of the individual soul against all the world.

Emerson was indeed a regal champion of the kingliness of the human spirit. One whole essay, *Self-Reliance*, is devoted to the proclaiming of the majesty of man. "Stand back!" he cries, "this infant soul must learn to walk alone." He affirms that "the whole value of history, of biography, is to increase my self-trust by demonstrating what man can be and do."

Not only does Emerson believe in the individual soul in this world, but he believes in its persistence through all time—in its immortality, which transcends all time. In discussing this question, Emerson's thought and style approach sublimity. In the first place, he rightly thinks that a truly great soul will never ask the question as to its eternity. "Of immortality, the soul, when well employed, is incurious. It is so well, that it is sure it will be well." "Oh," he cries, "it is not length of life, but depth of life!" "Give me insight into to-day, and you may have the antique and the future worlds!" He would have averred that the soul does not exist in space and time at all,—it is by its very nature immutable and eternal. One of the greatest things Emerson ever wrote was this powerful truth: "He who would be a great soul in the future must be a great soul now!"

Emerson's religion was too earnest and his positive worth too real to make one willing to engage in a destructive criticism of his views. And yet some things must be said concerning the shortcomings of his writings if they are to be taken as adequate statements of a great religion. I have already indicated one contradiction, and others could be pointed out. If some reader should answer that Emerson's religion was a spirit rather than a system, I should still maintain that in order to be preached convincingly to men a religion must be divested of contradictions and transfigured into the beauty and truth of ordered form. The human soul is reason, as Emerson himself more than once proclaims, and as reason it demands of its religion rationality, unity, coherence. The trouble with Emerson is not that he did not have a working creed, but that he did not take the pains to think it out more precisely, to do away with its contradictions, and to write it down carefully. The religious genius

for whom Emerson looked and to whom he was as a prophet in the wilderness preparing the way,—this interpreter that may one day follow Emerson, must have, besides Emerson's inspiration, the invincible logic which shall make his a gospel for the reason as well for the heart.

Emerson would have replied to all this by saying that "we cannot prove our faith by syllogisms. The argument refuses to form in the mind. A conclusion, an inference, a grand augury is ever hovering; but attempt to ground it, and the reasons are all vanishing and inadequate." Perhaps, after all, he was in essence profoundly right.

Emerson believed that the age of inspiration is never past. He believed that all sacred books were unrolled from the heart of nature, and that nature is still an open book to every sincere soul. He made this nature the symbol of Spirit. He identified natural law with spiritual law. He saw the miraculous in the common,—in days, years, summers; in women, children, night, and sleep in the night. To him the barest fact became transfigured poetry, and the summit of all facts was Character,—the consummation of Nature's age-long struggle.

In Emerson's own personal character is to be found the best expression of his religion, as indeed the true expression of any man's religion is to be found in his character. His life was a sainthood. No man was ever freer than Emerson from the vanities of dogmatic assumption. "The priest of the intellect," Alcott called him. "The friend and aider of those who live in the spirit," Matthew Arnold said.

As a religious being, this outstanding man must be ranked with and likened to the great souls of all time. He was an orator with a cause greater than that of Demosthenes or Cicero. He was an orator, but he had none of the tricks of the orator.

"He spoke, and words more soft than rain
Brought back the age of gold again!"

In his moral enthusiasm he was most like Kant, his philosophical master, though without his keen exactitude. As a lover of Beauty, he was akin to Plato, though not as appreciative as was he of the æsthetics of form in literature. He had the common-

sense of Franklin, but applied it, not like Franklin to the salvation of the body, but to the salvation of the soul. He had the quiet dignity and mild serenity of Washington, together with some of the quaintness of Izaak Walton, but quaintness written so large that it became genius. He had something of the compassion of Jesus and of the large democracy of Paul.

My best thought of Emerson pictures him as a man with the heart of a child,—I should say with the intellect of a child, only for fear of being misunderstood. He stood before nature as one who wonders, to whom—

"the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

He was like the Pagan by the shores of primitive seas,—the Pagan who made Gods of the good sun and stars. He was a son of nature wandering forever, wondering forever, seeking forever; loving always all things between the valleys of the sea and the cliffs of the clouds.

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BROWNING'S *A BLOT IN THE 'SCUTCHEON*: A DEFENCE

A Blot in the 'Scutcheon was presented under Macready's management in 1843, and under Phelps's in 1848, in both instances scoring a decided success in the minds and hearts of its finer-grained auditors, where scoring is most worth while. Joseph Arnould, a friend of both Browning and Alfred Domett, writing to the latter shortly after the first performance¹ declares that—

"The first night was magnificent. Poor Phelps did his utmost, Helen Faucit very fairly, and there could be no mistake at all about the honest enthusiasm of the audience. The gallery (and this, of course, was very gratifying, because not to be expected at a play of 'Browning') took all the points quite as quickly as the pit, and entered into the general interest and feeling of the action far more than the boxes—some of whom took it upon themselves to be shocked at being betrayed into so much interest for a young woman who had behaved so improperly as Mildred. Altogether, the first night was a triumph. The second night was evidently presided over by the spirit of the manager. I was one of about sixty or seventy in the pit, and we yet seemed crowded when compared to the desolate emptiness of the boxes. The gallery was again full, and again among all who were there were the same decided impressions of pity and horror produced. The third night I again took my wife to the boxes. It was evident at a glance that it was to be the last. My own delight, and hers too, in the play was increased at this third representation, and would have gone on increasing to a thirtieth; but the miserable, great, chilly house, with its apathy and emptiness, produced on us both the painful sensation which made her exclaim that she could cry with vexation at seeing so noble a play so basely marred. Now, there can be no doubt whatever that the absence of Macready's name from the list of performers of the new play was the means of keeping away numbers from the house. Whether if he had played and they had come the play would have been permanently popular is another ques-

¹ Frederic G. Kenyon (Editor) : *Robert Browning and Alfred Domett*.

tion. I don't myself think it would. With some of the grandest situations and finest passages you can conceive, it does undoubtedly want a sustained interest to the end of the third act; in fact, the whole of that act on the stage is a falling off from the second act, which I need not tell you is for all purposes of performance the most unpardonable fault. Still, it will no doubt—nay, it must, have done this, *viz.*, produced a higher opinion than ever of Browning's genius and the great things he is yet to do in the minds not only of a clique, but of the general world of readers. No one now would shake his head if you said of our Robert Browning, 'This man will go far yet.'"

And in his *'Personalia'* Edmund Gosse tells us that—

"When the curtain went down the applause was vociferous. Phelps was called and recalled, and there arose the cry of 'Author!' To this Mr. Browning remained silent and out of sight, and the audience continued to shout until Anderson came forward and keeping his eye on Mr. Browning said, 'I believe the author is not present, but if he is I entreat him to come forward!' The poet, however, turned a deaf ear to this appeal, and went home very sore with Macready, and what he considered his purposeless and vexatious scheming. *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon'* was announced to be played 'three times a week until further notice'; and was performed with entire success to crowded houses, until the final collapse of Macready's schemes brought it abruptly to a close."

Of two contemporary newspaper notices, one from the *Literary Gazette*, has it that—

"At the end the applause greatly predominated; but still we cannot promise the *Blot* that it will not soon be wiped off the stage,"

while the other, from the *Examiner*, is—

"...not sanguine of the chances of continued patronage to *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon'*. People are already finding out, we see, that there is a great deal that is equivocal in its sentiments, a vast quantity in its situations, and in its general composition not much to 'touch humanity'. We do not pretend to know what should touch humanity, beyond

² Edmund Gosse: *Robert Browning: Personalia*.

that which touches our own hearts, but we would give little for the feelings of a man who could read this tragedy without a deep emotion. It is very sad; painfully and perhaps needlessly so; but it is unutterably tender, passionate, and true."

Interesting accounts of the Browning-Macready misunderstanding in relation to this performance may be found in Gosse's *Personalia*; Mrs. Orr's *Life and Letters of Robert Browning*; Professor Lounsbury's *Atlantic* article, "A Philistine View"; Browning's letter to Frank Hill, Editor of the London *Daily News*, written December 15, 1884; and in *Robert Browning and Alfred Domett*.

Of the revival in 1848 'Mrs. Browning wrote as follows to her friend, Miss Mary Russell Mitford, from Florence:—

"We have been, or at least I have been, a little anxious lately about the fate of the *Blot in the 'Scutcheon*, which Mr. Phelps applied for my husband's permission to revive at Sadler's. Of course, putting the request was a mere form, as he had every right to act the play, and there was nothing to answer but one thing. Only it made one anxious—made me anxious—till we heard the result, and we, both of us, are very grateful to dear Mr. Chorley, who not only made it his business to be at the theatre the first night, but, before he slept, sat down like a true friend to give us the story of the result, and never, as he says, was a more complete and legitimate success. The play went straight to the heart of the audience, it seems, and we hear of its continuance on the stage from the papers. So far, so well. You may remember, or may not have heard, how Macready brought it out and put his foot on it in the flash of a quarrel between manager and author, and Phelps, knowing the whole secret and feeling the power of the play, determined on making a revival of it in his own theatre, which was wise, as the event proves. Mr. Chorley called his acting really 'fine'."

The play was successfully produced in America by Lawrence Barrett in 1885, and by Mrs. Lemoyne in 1905.

Critical opinion concerning this drama has been strangely divided. On the one hand, 'Professor W. J. Alexander considers

³ *Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*.

⁴ W. J. Alexander: *Introduction to the Poetry of Robert Browning*.

it "unnatural and repugnant," and 'Miss F. Mary Wilson feels that "the impression is one of staginess, slightness and ineffectualness, almost as though the planned-out work of an inferior writer had been bequeathed to Browning to make the best of." On the other hand, 'Dickens wrote to his friend and biographer Forster:—

"Browning's play has thrown me into a perfect passion of sorrow. To say that there is anything in its subject save what is lovely, true, deeply affecting, full of the best emotion, the most earnest feeling, and the most true and tender source of interest, is to say that there is no light in the sun, and no heat in the blood. It is full of genius, natural and great thoughts, profound and yet simple and beautiful in its vigour. I know nothing that is so affecting, nothing in any book I have ever read, as Mildred's recurrence to that 'I was so young—I had no mother.' I know no love like it, no passion like it, no moulding of a splendid thing after its conception like it. And I swear it is a tragedy that must be played; and must be played, moreover, by Macready. . . . But the tragedy I shall never forget, or less vividly remember than I do now. And if you tell Browning that I have seen it, tell him that I believe from my soul there is no man living (and not many dead) who could produce such a work."

And 'Arthur Symons, a so much more warrantable critic than Dickens, pronounces *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon*—

" . . . the simplest, and perhaps the deepest and finest of Mr. Browning's plays. The Browning Society's performances, and Mr. Barrett's in America, have proved its acting capacities, its power to hold and thrill an audience. The language has a rich simplicity of the highest dramatic value, quick with passion, pregnant with thought and masterly in imagination; the plot and characters are perhaps more interesting and affecting than in any other of the plays; while the effect of the whole is impressive from its unity. The scene is English; the time is in the eighteenth century; the motive, family honour and dishonour. The story appeals to ready popular emotions, emotions which, though

⁵F. Mary Wilson: *A Primer on Browning*.

⁶John Forster: *Life of Dickens*.

⁷Arthur Symons: *An Introduction to the Study of Browning*.

lying nearest the surface, are also the most deeply rooted. The whole action is passionately pathetic, and it is infused with a twofold tragedy, which hangs on a word, spoken only when too late to save three lives. This irony of circumstance, while it is the source of what is saddest in human discord, is also the motive of what has come to be the only satisfying harmony in dramatic art. It takes the place, in our modern world, of the necessity of the Greeks; and is not less impressive because it arises from the impulse and unreasoning wilfulness of man rather than from the implacable inconsistency of God. It is with perfect justice, both moral and artistic, that the fatal crisis, though mediately the result of accident, of error, is shown to be the consequence and the punishment of wrong. A tragedy resulting from the mistakes of the wholly innocent would jar on our sense of right, and could never produce a legitimate work of art. Even *Cædipus* suffers, not merely because he is under the curse of a higher power, but because he is wilful and rushes upon his own fate. *Timon* suffers, not because he was generous and good, but from the defects of his qualities. So, in this play, each of the characters calls down upon his own head the suffering which at first seems to be a mere caprice and confusion of chance. Mildred Tresham and Henry Mertoun, both very young, ignorant and unguarded, have loved. They attempt a late reparation, apparently with success, but the hasty suspicion of Lord Tresham, Mildred's brother, diverted indeed into a wrong channel, brings down on both a terrible retribution. Tresham, who shares the ruin he causes, feels, too, that his punishment is due. He has acted without pausing to consider, and he is called on to pay the penalty of 'evil wrought by want of thought.' "

The present writer's opinion inclines toward Symons's view rather than Alexander's, although he would not, in a comparative study of Browning's dramas, rank *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon'* quite so high as does Symons. While it is true that Browning makes some doubtful concessions to conventional stage requirements, and while the play, perhaps on that account, exhibits occasional melodramatic tendencies, yet it is worth so much more as a work of high creative art than as a theatrical performance that its stage 'points' prove, after all, only the slightest blots on *its* escutcheon. The double motive, first of all, is admirably indicated and inwoven — Thorold's

love of honor, Mildred's love of purity. Though Mildred has ignorantly sinned and 'conventionally 'fallen', yet her passion for purity is truer, completer, more understanding than is over-righteous Thorold's love of pride. The history of the relation of these two—for they are the prime persons of the play, protagonist and antagonist, and the crisis is developed during their increasingly tense situation in Act II—the history of the relation of these two is the old history of professional good *versus* human instinct; of technical honor *versus* the blind errors of love; and of the consciously superior person, self-appointed vicar of the Eternal Will, *versus* her whose warm faith and affection have been hiding in a sort of golden maiden-mist the figure of the sworded angel that is now to meet her as she turns to reënter Eden.

For Thorold, whom his retainers find precisely "what a nobleman should be," and who is Mertoun's boyish ideal of "the scholar and the gentleman," is yet more stained than Mildred, the dove whose pinion Mertoun has so rashly hurt. That is Browning's insistent implication, and it is a very true and impressive one. Thorold is proud of homage, of the recognition of his honor, rather than of the root principle and subtle genius of honor-in-itself. He is a correct traditional gentleman, but has not a nature adequate to his present need. Kind and brotherly as his heart would have him be, he becomes, nevertheless, in habit and programme, imposingly statuesque, finely dead. Mildred has a keener and more just sense of honor than his own, for she subjectively agonizes and hopes, where he objectively resents and condemns; she is even more Hebraistic than is he in her recognition of the inevitableness of law and fate:—

"Needs
Must I have sinned much, so to suffer!"
"Oh why, why glided sin the snake
Into the Paradise Heaven meant us both?"
". . . . This will not be!"
"Sin has surprised us, so will punishment."

But she is a warm Hellenist also in her love of life, of family, of Mertoun; in her romantic courage; her smiling rallies from despondency; her childlike trust in the fatherly indulgence of

God. In brief, gloomed though her spirit is with a sense of impending punishment, she dimly sees behind its dreadful cloud the lining of redemption, and feels for this very reason constrained into a strange loyalty to the law of Nemesis, a loyalty she can less and less shake off. The souls of both brother and sister are torn with the tragedy of conflicting ideals, of an unwithstandable invasion of their highest goods, and their final recognitions of the great meanings behind the tragedy of each bring the play to a close:

Mildred—

"As I dare approach that Heaven
Which has not bade a living thing despair,
Which needs no code to keep its grace from stain,
But bids the vilest worm that turns on it
Desist and be forgiven—I—forgive not,
But bless you, Thorold, from my soul of souls!"

Tresham—

"Vengeance is God's, not man's. Remember me!"

The whole atmosphere and movement of the drama may be strikingly keyed by Sidney Lanier's beautiful lines from *The Marshes of Glynn*:—

"God out of knowledge and good out of infinite pain,
And sight out of blindness and purity out of a stain."

Of the other characters, Guendolen and Mertoun, although dramatically subordinate, are drawn with skill and sympathy. Guendolen, particularly, is a human woman, sisterly, loving, happy-hearted, quick-witted—whose ministry to Mildred at the moment of moments rouses one's emotion by its imperative and affectionate power. Mertoun wins her early pleased regard, not only as the lover of Mildred, but also because she detects the zest and sincerity behind his half-timid acknowledgments of Thorold's worth and friendship. Mertoun is a being like to Mildred herself and worthy to be her lover, though with less sensitiveness to the record-tappings of spiritual telegraphy. He is incurably young, hopeful, romantic, brown-haired, blue-eyed,—a very Romeo for looks and love. As Guendolen's nobility rises to its height in the presence of Mildred's suffering, so his bright spirit most gallantly expresses itself toward both Mildred and

Thorold in the moment of his death. Austin is slightly drawn, and has but little place in either action or dialogue, save where dramatic necessity may prescribe his presence for the sake of emphasis of situation or convenience of arrangement.

Gerard, the warrener, loyal as the old hunter is loyal in *The Flight of the Duchess*, is the technical pivot of the play, upon whose revelation to Thorold the crisis and catastrophe depend, and whose faithful breast is itself woefully self-divided in its own personal tragedy, as wavering now toward the formal honor of Earl Tresham's house and now toward instinctive faith in the innocence of his young mistress, Mildred.

There are some outstanding criticisms of certain manners and moments (or expressions of moments) in this drama that ought here, perhaps, to be presented and, if possible, answered.

In 'Mr. Henry Jones's paper read before the Boston Browning Society, "Browning as a Dramatic Poet," he writes:—

"What a critic has a complete right to object to is that Mildred is presented to us in no other mood than this of sublime moral tension; and that, so far as she is concerned, the whole action takes place not in the ordinary world, but on 'Mount Sinai altogether on a smoke,' amidst the terrors of a broken law. I would repeat my belief that practically our only task here on earth is 'to learn thro' evil that good is best,' and that the drama at its height turns on moral issues. But, on the other hand, that lesson has to be learned in a natural environment, where the sun shines and the flowers grow, and men and women eat and drink, marry and are given in marriage. That natural environment is not to be found in this play. Shakespeare would have made it break in, so intimate is his touch on reality. When the moods and passions have swept his characters beyond the confines of ordinary life, the common world comes knocking at the door, and we have such scenes as that of the porter in *Macbeth*, which deepens the tragedy and makes it real by letting in the contrast of the common light of day in its ordinary course. But Mildred lives throughout the play in another world from ours; or, if it is our world, if our world is spiritual at its core and morality its essence, its natural veil is torn off by the poet. Her thoughts, her true

**Boston Browning Society Papers, 1886-97.*

self, had already passed beyond the walls of the prison-house. Her—

‘spirit yearned to purge
Her stains off in the fierce renewing fire.’

And in consequence her death does not touch us like the deaths of Cordelia or Desdemona. She is not removed from our very midst, and we are not left desolate; for she was always far away, in a world not ours.”

Although Mr. Jones further develops his thought, enough has been quoted, perhaps, to show his meaning. Are his words quite fair? Does not his disappointment amount to a willingness to blame the nineteenth-century Browning because he does not write in the manner of the sixteenth-century Shakespeare? Is it not true that the instincts and interests of both writers and readers in our own time are immensely more subjective in point of preoccupation than they were then, and that we are all willing now to take much for granted that it was necessary to impress particularly upon the minds of Elizabethan audiences concerning *locale* and environment? If our ancestors could not work out their spiritual problems without frequent specific assurances of the

“Good gigantic smile o’ the brown old earth,”

because their superstitions made these problems more fearful, though not more awful, to them than to us—if they needed such tyings to earth, so do not we. With the Anglo-Saxon, to lose his grip on reality—and this was easy for him—was to become for the nonce a wild poet, beating his way about amid the dragons of the deep and the nicors of unknown lands. He was afraid—and in large measure for this very reason unable—to think much, although he felt profoundly. The Elizabethan temper marked an advance in dignity and self-confidence; but the modern imagination is, relatively speaking, weaned from the bosom of the old material Gaia, and can experience sustained adventure. Even so, Browning does not ignore the external realities in his dramas—certainly not in this one. They are there, duly in their place—he does not care to exhibit them or even quite record them. They are implied. One does not say of a plant that it grows in the earth; one only says that it grows. It is in the growth instinct

and tendency that Browning is so intensely interested, in common with all moderns. Nor is it Shakespeare's earth-regard that makes him Shakespeare, prophet of all time, as well as interpreter of his own, but rather his ability often to persuade his auditors and readers away from earth, in a fashion which none of his contemporaries could grasp or follow.

Another objection has been raised, this time by *Prof. W. J. Rolfe and Miss Heloise Hersey, to the age of Mildred:—

“‘Mildred is fourteen.’ In this extraordinary statement seems to be the chief dramatic blemish of the play. It taxes our credulity to believe that Juliet was only fourteen; but with her we could at least fall back on the theory that girls develop more rapidly in southern countries than northern, and that they are married proportionately early. Here we are asked to credit the amazing statement that a conservative English Lord deliberately and indeed eagerly arranges the betrothal of his sister at the time-honoured Juliet age. It is interesting to note how completely Browning ignores his own limitations as to years. Far instance, Tresham speaks of Mildred as ‘imbued with lore,’ etc. If the English girl of the last century reached that point of culture at fourteen, what must she have been at forty? It is impossible to believe that Browning ever actually pictured Mildred as fourteen, though we see in the next scene why he wants to represent her as young as possible.”

To this it may be replied that Browning is no more attempting to make a fact-point of the matter than of the ages of Pippa or Pompilia. It is not the poet's business to inform, but to interpret and inspire. All that Browning cares about here is that we shall understand Mildred to be young indeed in body, and yet, on account of native instinct and family training, as unusual in mind as she is beautiful of feature. Even on the side of historical fact, it is perhaps worth while remarking that marriages were contracted at such early ages during the eighteenth and even the nineteenth centuries, in both England and America, oftener than would now be supposed. It does not seem to have surprised anyone that Poe married the Lenore of his *Raven*, Virginia Clemm, in 1835, when she was but thirteen; and even more sig-

*Rolfe and Hersey (Editors): *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon and Other Dramas*.

nificant for us here is the love affair and probable marriage of Stella and the famous Dean.

In his *"The Poetry of Robert Browning"* the late Stopford Brooke expresses strong objection to Mildred's over-submissiveness during the library scene, in these words:—

"One touch of the courage she shows in the last scene would have saved in the previous scene herself, her lover, and her brother. The lie she lets her brother infer when she allows him to think that the lover she has confessed to is not the Earl, yet that she will marry the Earl, degrades her altogether and justly in her brother's eyes, and is so terribly out of tune with her character that I repeat I cannot understand how Browning could invent that situation. It spoils the whole presentation of the girl. It is not only out of her character, it is out of nature."

I am very far from wishing it to seem that I hold too partial or elastic a brief for Browning, but to my thinking this criticism is extraordinarily deficient in grasp and feeling. Out of character? Out of nature? The truth is precisely otherwise. In the dramatic romance, *Count Gismond*, Browning's heroine asks:—

"What says the body when they spring
Some monstrous torture-engine's whole
Strength on it? No more says the soul,"

on which Mrs. Browning comments:—

"You never wrote anything which lived with me more than that. It is such a dreadful truth."

So with Mildred. She has not the power to withstand the shock of her brother's accusation; she is—and it is Browning's almost sole endeavor to present and prove her so—relatively, essentially innocent, and innocence has always been far less ready and able to justify itself in speech than has guilt. Her fine nature, too, sees that even mistake, like crime itself, must provoke its Nemesis—in Act I Mildred has indicated more than once her prevision, her sense, of Fate. Now that Fate is suddenly upon her, she is stunned into acceptance of its reality, and in quite unable to challenge its right.

"The first shame over, all that would might fall."

¹⁰ Stopford Brooke: *The Poetry of Robert Browning*.

If, on the one hand, vengeance belongs to God; so, on the other, she feels, must justification. It is true that a word would save her, but it is a word that Love cannot speak, for it involves her lover. Blameless as he is in her eyes, he must still be held blameless by all others, and she welcomes martyrdom, instinctively, unquestioningly, for his sake, as a pure, womanly, natural Mildred would surely do. The crisis lies in these words:—

Tresham—

“Now dictate

This morning's letter that shall countermand
Last night's—do dictate that!”

Mildred—

“But, Thorold—if
I will receive him as I said?”

Tresham—

“The Earl?”

Mildred—

“I will receive him.”

And it is a crisis alike of extraordinary dramatic value and of human likeness. Neither Mildred nor Thorold can do other than so; they are in the clutch of circumstance.

But the most strenuous broadside delivered against this play is to be found in the article by “Prof. Thomas R. Lounsbury—already referred to—entitled “A Philistine View.” It is therein premised that “the production is here treated from the uncultured, unspiritual Philistine point of view exclusively,” and the decks being thus rapidly cleared for action, some seven or eight guns are fired. Professor Lounsbury's contentions anticipate that of Stopford Brooke, and include two others that are, perhaps, especially noticeable, namely, the superfluosness of the intrigue and the needless folly and danger of the last two visits of Henry to Mildred. “There is no reason,” he declares, “why the hero should not from the very outset have wooed the heroine in the way of honorable marriage.” If his failure to do so was due to fear of Lord Tresham, “this fear had not extended to other members of the family, where it would have been more in place. That which had prevented him from seeking from the brother what could

¹¹ *The Atlantic Monthly*, December, 1899.

have been had for the asking did not prevent him from engaging and succeeding in the effort to overcome the virtue of the sister."

It seems to the present writer that the poet's own explanation is eminently satisfactory, although to some temperaments this English restraint will continue, no doubt, to seem inexplicable. Love is not unusually at variance with prudence and common-sense. It is, of course, wholly wide of the mark to speak of the Henry-Mildred relationship as the deliberate effort of a rake to betray a woman.

The second objection—touching the manifest unwisdom of Mertoun's midnight visits after his formal recognition as Mildred's suitor, appears more formidable, yet will hardly need an extended reply. The intimate conversation of the lovers with which the first act concludes demands complete privacy on account of both its length and its content; and not only so, but Mildred and Henry alike feel that the death of the old relation must be tenderly watched and its burial rightly accomplished before they can together take up the outward difficulties and responsibilities of the new. The human probability of the song, indeed, we may agree with Professor Lounsbury, is questionable, but of its dramatic virtue and self-justifying lyric beauty there can be no doubt. The final visit is merely the keeping of an "appointment by one who would regard it as sacred, and who was ignorant of any urgent reason why it should not be kept. Nor does Guendolen characterlessly forward the catastrophe, or "simply fold her hands," as is charged.

"First lead this Mildred to her room,"

she requires of Austin,—

"Go on the other side;
And then we'll seek your brother."

That their search for Tresham fails is well within the bounds of the probable and is, of course, dramatically necessary. Mildred's prevision of her lover's doom is not to be taken as a conscious prophecy, for it is only with a tardy shock of conviction that she accuses Thorold at last of Mertoun's murder, with the more ago-

¹³*Mertoun*: "Oh, trust me! Then our final meeting's fixed to-morrow night?"

nized wonder since his code of honor bids him await plea and palliation before he strikes.

The final point of censure that I wish here to notice is made by "William Sharp, as follows:—

"More disastrous, poetically, is the ruinous banality of Mildred's anti-climax, when after her brother reveals himself as her lover's murderer, she, like the typical young Miss Anglaise of certain French novelists, betrays her incapacity for true passion by exclaiming, in effect, 'What, you've murdered my lover! Well, tell me all. Pardon? Oh, well, I pardon you; at least I think I do. Thorold, my dear brother, how very wretched you must be!'

"I am unaware if this anti-climax has been pointed out by anyone, but surely it is one of the most appalling lapses of genius which could be indicated."

Now, that is very unworthy and, it should be said, uncharacteristic criticism on the part of this usually thoughtful and sensitive writer. All dramatic moments must be judged with careful regard to the steps that have conditioned them, and to the particular situation of the chief person or persons concerned. The Mildred of the crisis, who has sacrificed her reputation for Mertoun's sake, is not the Mildred who would hesitate to yield her life in the catastrophe when Mertoun lies stiffening in death. Utterly unselfish, here as there, her love for Henry, even upon her first moments of awareness of his end, instantly leaps out toward his slayer in a sympathetic, vicarious sense of error and remorse. That such an instinct is psychologically true has been shown time and again in life as in literature. The first impulse of a finely unselfish nature, upon experiencing sorrow, is to compassionate fellow-sufferers. Add to this Mildred's sense of her own imminent death—a sense that would clear away all false resentments and half-forgivenesses, and insure a quickened last insight into the things of human experience. And add again her willingness to yield to Fate the things that are Fate's. Mildred, like Caponsacchi, "finds out when the day of things is done." As to the speaker in *The Flight of the Duchess*, so now to her—"there seemed nothing to do more." With Mertoun dead, she is

¹³William Sharp: *Life of Robert Browning*.

already dead, and her forgiveness of Thorold is but the echo and repetition of her lover's excuse for his mistaken foe, who has now at last come to see—

"through
The troubled surface of his crime and yours
A depth of purity immovable."

A tragedy of love and pride,—of love that, unwittingly violating Love's canons, suffers Fate's penalty, yet in its very suffering finds Fate but another name for Love; of pride that brings being and seeming too close together, and so loses the subtler lights that each may cast—this is the story of *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon'*. The two refrains of Mildred's motherlessness and of Thorold's stainlessness, touching the play now with tenderness and now with portent, though different in occasion, are one in meaning. They seem to say: Who loves, lives; and who lives, loves!

GEORGE HERBERT CLARKE.

The University of the South.

SYMBOLISM IN THE THEATRE

That symbolism should play any significant part in the theatre seems, at first thought, unlikely. The fundamental idea of the dramatic seems to forbid it. The drama is "the imitation of persons engaged in action." That action is essential to drama is insisted upon by ancients and moderns alike. "Certain persons", says Aristotle, "call their works *dramas* because they imitate those who are engaged in *doing* something."¹ "Tragedy is an imitation of a worthy or illustrious and perfect *action*," etc.² Freytag defines tragedy as "passion in action" and insists that passion which does not find expression in action is not dramatic, but lyric. The drama mirrors external events or interprets inner experiences by outward actions. It has to do primarily with human life as it finds expression in deeds. Inner spiritual experiences not directly connected with action seem essentially undramatic.

Symbolism, on the other hand, concerns itself with just those experiences which seem beyond the reach of drama. It has to do not so much with the material as with the immaterial world. And the distinction is significant. In speaking of the German romanticists, R. M. Wernaer remarks: "Our writers felt themselves possessed of two distinct personalities, one facing the natural world with its sensuous qualities, its definable limitations, its laws of time and place; the other facing Godward with its circle of infinity, its celestial values, its feeling-tones, its emotional ecstasies, its dreams and visions."³ The drama is naturally the imitation or reproduction of the former world; symbolism is the natural language of the latter. "The symbolist wishes to create in the reader a certain state of the soul."⁴ His task is "in some way to reconstitute in the modern mind a lost faculty, the sense of the mysterious."⁵ "In the Symbol proper,—

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Sometimes a dramatic character and a human figure used as a symbol appear together. This is true in *The Master Builder*. The subject of the play is the supplanting of the older generation by the younger. Ragnar Brovik is a dramatic character, a genuine

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This use of the human figure as a symbol is common in modern drama when the idea transcends the limits of the individual life, or when the mysterious and mystical suggestion would be lost in a too definite presentation. Maeterlinck's *Pelléas and Mélisande*, for example, is not so much a drama of individual lives as of the great spiritual forces which work behind life and control the actions of men in spite of human will. Under the influence of these forces the characters are not human individuals, but symbols. The theme is the awakening of love out of ignorance and innocence, and the awful and mysterious consequences of that awakening. It is the Paolo and Francesca story treated not as a reproduction of life, but as a symbol of life. *Mélisande* is not a person acting under the force of love, nor is she the personification of love. She is a living symbol, which suggests more than it embodies and shows the operation of forces controlling life without reproducing life itself. Golaud does not simply find a maiden by a spring in the forest. He meets rather the force of love in its ignorance and innocence, something which he can never thoroughly understand. A little later, when *Mélisande* leans over the fountain in the park till her hair touches the water, then leaps to her feet to play with her wedding-ring,

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The method has its obvious disadvantages. The necessary lack of individuality in the figures precludes clear and fine dramatic characterization, and the placing of real and symbolic characters side by side is confusing. Again, since the symbol is not a personification and cannot, therefore, always be equated with that for which it stands, the result is a vagueness which puzzles the commonplace mind. Certainly, it asks too much of the 'tired business man' and the 'butterfly of fashion', who are supposed to make up the major part of an audience in the theatre. Then, too, the symbolism often interferes with the

plausibility of the action. It does so, for example, in Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken*. Rubek has subordinated love to art, and his high ideals have consequently become atrophied. These deadened ideals are well symbolized by Irene, pale and rigid, with dress in perpendicular folds and arms crossed upon her breast; but the moment she enters thus and moves across the stage with stiff and measured steps, we realize how impossible it is for her to act with human naturalness. Moreover, as the action proceeds, the necessities of the symbolism make the scenes more and more artificial. When Rubek realizes that life is above art and longs to live the higher life, the action shifts to the mountains. The symbolism demands that Maia and the hunter, seeking sensual enjoyment, should descend and that Rubek and Irene, seeking the higher life, should go up to the dangerous heights, where the storms are on the peaks and where the two finally perish in an avalanche. The symbolism is perfect, but there is no reason except the symbolic reason why Rubek and Irene should persist in going up in the face of the storm. The dramatic action is not convincing in its human motives. Indeed, the whole scene lacks the reality of life.

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By thinking persistently on the symbolic meaning the spectator may get a fairly clear dramatic impression of even so complicated a play as Hauptmann's *The Sunken Bell*. Heinrich is a human character, within whose nature the conflict of the play takes place. The Vicar, the Schoolmaster, and the Barber are human figures symbolizing the deadening influences of conventional religion, education, and daily life. Rautendelein, a folk-lore figure, represents the beneficent spirit of nature, the longing for freedom, the inspiration of art. The wood-sprites symbolize the worst side of the natural instincts. Such a mingling of human characters, symbolic human figures, and figures from

folk-lore used as symbols promises confusion. But when we look at the play as a symbol and not as a reproduction of life, the meaning emerges. The play represents the conflict of art and life, of freedom and duty, of instinct and reason. Heinrich cannot develop his free soul as an artist under the constraints of conventional religion, formal thinking, and humdrum daily life. The bell which he forges under these restrictions is made for the valley, not for the heights; and when the attempt is made to place it on the mountain-top, it falls into the mere. Heinrich, too, falls, dazed, unconscious, but is awakened by the kiss of Rautendelein, the free spirit of nature. He forswears the common duties of life, deserts his family, and seeks the clear air of the heights, where he can use the forces of nature to forge a bell, not for the church, but for the sun. Yet the forces of nature do not gladly do his will, because he is not in full harmony with them. He cannot quite shake off the old influences. Life calls to him through his children, who bring to him their mother's tears. He repents and returns. But this is not all. Repentance does not bring peace: the old limitations are worse than before. He must again seek the heights, though he perish. Here is the essential tragedy of life as the German conceived it, prophetic, too, of how he was later to work it out. He must exercise the will to achieve at the sacrifice of all human sentiments, in defiance of all the duties of life. The task is impossible. He is too human for the greatest success. He is strong but not strong enough, called but not chosen. He is not a genuine superman.

In certain symbolic dramas there is an effort to get away from human characters altogether. In Maeterlinck's *The Blue Bird*, for example, the only real persons are the two children, and their actions are controlled entirely by the Fairy Bérylune. The *dramatis personæ* seem hopelessly undramatic: spirits of sugar, bread, water, and fire to represent natural forces; light to signify spiritual vision; the dog and the cat to represent loyalty and deceit; ghosts of ancestors and of children still unborn to symbolize the forces of the past and the future. Yet it is easy to submit oneself to the spirit of the piece as the action develops in symbol the search for the truth which brings happiness. The

visit to the dead grandparents indicates that we can get glimpses of truth from the past, but cannot thus arrive at reality. A search among the secrets of nature reveals many seeming blue birds of truth, but they die in the light of broad day. Perhaps the real blue bird is there, but it is beyond the children's reach. All nature fights against man in his search for truth, so that Light and Loyalty save him with difficulty. A vision of the future and a questioning of generations yet unborn fail to disclose the real secret. Even when truth is finally found through sympathy with common life, it easily escapes. And all this is not dead allegory: it is living symbol.

In the same symbolic manner, *The Betrothal*, a sequel to *The Blue Bird*, presents the awakening of youth to the influences of love, the problem of finding the true 'affinity', and choosing her for a wife. To Maeterlinck, whose interest in science is hardly less than his interest in mysticism, the deciding force is not chance nor destiny, but the forces of heredity and the instincts of maternity. As Tytyl, grown to young manhood, thinks of the various girls who attract him, they appear before him, summoned by Berylune's fairy wand. Among them is the veiled figure of one whom he does not distinctly remember: she represents his unconscious thought. From these he must choose. Light (Reason) cannot make the choice for him. His ancestors, who represent the forces of heredity, are puzzled, because they cannot find the future wife among the active figures, and the veiled and lifeless figure will not awake. Even the children to come, symbols of the maternal instinct, seem uncertain, though the youngest does finally recognize its mother in the veiled figure. The veiled figure then awakes, but cannot become the wife and mother until the subconscious thought of Tytyl has become conscious.

In Rostand's *Chanticleer* symbolism invades the field of social satire. Here the personages are all animals. Chanticleer himself is a deluded and cocky idealist, yet a genuine herald of the dawn, whose song is a call to duty. Patou, the dog, a symbol of loyal common-sense, counsels and aids Chanticleer, the idealist. Both of them despise the Blackbird, who represents the new and smart intellectualism which miscalls, exaggerates,

and vulgarizes, never losing an opportunity to prick the bubbles of faith. The Guinea-hen is the leader in artificial social insincerities; the Peacock, strutting champion of the artificial, is her chief admirer.

The interpretation of this play offers interesting considerations. When Chanticler learns that he does not make the sun rise by his crowing, he does not become a cynic and talk like the Black-bird. He keeps his faith. He has still "the night of the eyelid to route." At least he can make poor doubtful creatures of the twilight believe in the dawn. He has in his soul a faith so faithful that it comes back after it has been slain. This is the interpretation of the ultra-romanticist, and it satisfies him well enough. But Professor Babbitt, persistent foe of the romantic imagination, the prevalence of which in modern times he thinks has been so disastrous to a sane view of life, sees here a perfect example of the typical romantic shift from one illusion to another. "Chanticler", he says, "still maintains his idealistic pose even after he has discovered that the sun is not actually made to rise by his crowing." He hugs his illusion in spite of reality, instead of being "humbly thankful at having escaped from the dangerous prevalence of imagination and entered once more into the domain of sober probability."¹⁰

All this is very interesting comment, but it misses the important point of the play. It misses the deeper significance of the symbolism. Chanticler really represents a fundamental truth, though he does not quite know what it is. His song symbolizes the cry of the earth reaching out for the light, the longing of all nature for the sun. Standing thus for the process of growth, the 'vital push' of nature, it is a genuine call to duty, though it does not actually cause the sun to rise. The idea, though romantically expressed, is not pure illusion. It leads to truth; and to make illusion the pathway to truth is the legitimate function of the literary imagination.

But what of the stage presentation of these symbolic dramas? They could hardly be successful if produced in strict accordance with the naturalistic method fostered by David Belasco and

¹⁰ Babbitt, Irving: *Rousseau and Romanticism*.

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On the other hand, he who can forget conventional dramatic standards and fix the mind on the symbolic meaning alone will receive a new and significant dramatic experience. The new method breaks down the recognized limits of drama and brings within the scope of the theatre experiences hitherto considered undramatic. It makes possible as never before the drama of mystery and mysticism.

By thinking persistently on the symbolic meaning the spectator may get a fairly clear dramatic impression of even so complicated a play as Hauptmann's *The Sunken Bell*. Heinrich is a human character, within whose nature the conflict of the play takes place. The Vicar, the Schoolmaster, and the Barber are human figures symbolizing the deadening influences of conventional religion, education, and daily life. Rautendelein, a folk-lore figure, represents the beneficent spirit of nature, the longing for freedom, the inspiration of art. The wood-sprites symbolize the worst side of the natural instincts. Such a mingling of human characters, symbolic human figures, and figures from

folk-lore used as symbols promises confusion. But when we look at the play as a symbol and not as a reproduction of life, the meaning emerges. The play represents the conflict of art and life, of freedom and duty, of instinct and reason. Heinrich cannot develop his free soul as an artist under the constraints of conventional religion, formal thinking, and humdrum daily life. The bell which he forges under these restrictions is made for the valley, not for the heights; and when the attempt is made to place it on the mountain-top, it falls into the mere. Heinrich, too, falls, dazed, unconscious, but is awakened by the kiss of Rautendelein, the free spirit of nature. He forswears the common duties of life, deserts his family, and seeks the clear air of the heights, where he can use the forces of nature to forge a bell, not for the church, but for the sun. Yet the forces of nature do not gladly do his will, because he is not in full harmony with them. He cannot quite shake off the old influences. Life calls to him through his children, who bring to him their mother's tears. He repents and returns. But this is not all. Repentance does not bring peace: the old limitations are worse than before. He must again seek the heights, though he perish. Here is the essential tragedy of life as the German conceived it, prophetic, too, of how he was later to work it out. He must exercise the will to achieve at the sacrifice of all human sentiments, in defiance of all the duties of life. The task is impossible. He is too human for the greatest success. He is strong but not strong enough, called but not chosen. He is not a genuine superman.

In certain symbolic dramas there is an effort to get away from human characters altogether. In Maeterlinck's *The Blue Bird*, for example, the only real persons are the two children, and their actions are controlled entirely by the Fairy Bérylune. The *dramatis personæ* seem hopelessly undramatic: spirits of sugar, bread, water, and fire to represent natural forces; light to signify spiritual vision; the dog and the cat to represent loyalty and deceit; ghosts of ancestors and of children still unborn to symbolize the forces of the past and the future. Yet it is easy to submit oneself to the spirit of the piece as the action develops in symbol the search for the truth which brings happiness. The

visit to the dead grandparents indicates that we can get glimpses of truth from the past, but cannot thus arrive at reality. A search among the secrets of nature reveals many seeming blue birds of truth, but they die in the light of broad day. Perhaps the real blue bird is there, but it is beyond the children's reach. All nature fights against man in his search for truth, so that Light and Loyalty save him with difficulty. A vision of the future and a questioning of generations yet unborn fail to disclose the real secret. Even when truth is finally found through sympathy with common life, it easily escapes. And all this is not dead allegory: it is living symbol.

In the same symbolic manner, *The Betrothal*, a sequel to *The Blue Bird*, presents the awakening of youth to the influences of love, the problem of finding the true 'affinity', and choosing her for a wife. To Maeterlinck, whose interest in science is hardly less than his interest in mysticism, the deciding force is not chance nor destiny, but the forces of heredity and the instincts of maternity. As Tytyl, grown to young manhood, thinks of the various girls who attract him, they appear before him, summoned by Berylune's fairy wand. Among them is the veiled figure of one whom he does not distinctly remember: she represents his unconscious thought. From these he must choose. Light (Reason) cannot make the choice for him. His ancestors, who represent the forces of heredity, are puzzled, because they cannot find the future wife among the active figures, and the veiled and lifeless figure will not awake. Even the children to come, symbols of the maternal instinct, seem uncertain, though the youngest does finally recognize its mother in the veiled figure. The veiled figure then awakes, but cannot become the wife and mother until the subconscious thought of Tytyl has become conscious.

In Rostand's *Chanticleer* symbolism invades the field of social satire. Here the personages are all animals. Chanticleer himself is a deluded and cocky idealist, yet a genuine herald of the dawn, whose song is a call to duty. Patou, the dog, a symbol of loyal common-sense, counsels and aids Chanticleer, the idealist. Both of them despise the Blackbird, who represents the new and smart intellectualism which miscalls, exaggerates,

and vulgarizes, never losing an opportunity to prick the bubbles of faith. The Guinea-hen is the leader in artificial social insincerities; the Peacock, strutting champion of the artificial, is her chief admirer.

The interpretation of this play offers interesting considerations. When Chanticleer learns that he does not make the sun rise by his crowing, he does not become a cynic and talk like the Black-bird. He keeps his faith. He has still "the night of the eyelid to route." At least he can make poor doubtful creatures of the twilight believe in the dawn. He has in his soul a faith so faithful that it comes back after it has been slain. This is the interpretation of the ultra-romanticist, and it satisfies him well enough. But Professor Babbitt, persistent foe of the romantic imagination, the prevalence of which in modern times he thinks has been so disastrous to a sane view of life, sees here a perfect example of the typical romantic shift from one illusion to another. "Chanticleer", he says, "still maintains his idealistic pose even after he has discovered that the sun is not actually made to rise by his crowing." He hugs his illusion in spite of reality, instead of being "humbly thankful at having escaped from the dangerous prevalence of imagination and entered once more into the domain of sober probability."¹⁰

All this is very interesting comment, but it misses the important point of the play. It misses the deeper significance of the symbolism. Chanticleer really represents a fundamental truth, though he does not quite know what it is. His song symbolizes the cry of the earth reaching out for the light, the longing of all nature for the sun. Standing thus for the process of growth, the 'vital push' of nature, it is a genuine call to duty, though it does not actually cause the sun to rise. The idea, though romantically expressed, is not pure illusion. It leads to truth; and to make illusion the pathway to truth is the legitimate function of the literary imagination.

But what of the stage presentation of these symbolic dramas? They could hardly be successful if produced in strict accordance with the naturalistic method fostered by David Belasco and

¹⁰ Babbitt, Irving: *Rousseau and Romanticism*.

Otto Brahm. These plays have succeeded on the stage largely through the development of suggestive and symbolic methods of staging. A classic example is the Moscow Art Theatre's production of *The Blue Bird*. "The Moscow artists", says Sheldon Cheney, "tried to visualize the symbolism of the various scenes in their backgrounds, with the result that the action progressed through a series of fairyland pictures of a beautifully imaginative sort."¹¹ Meynholdt went still further in his productions of Maeterlinck's plays in Petrograd. Alexander Bakshy thus describes his method:—

"He staged Maeterlinck's dramas on the one plane, *i.e.*, he reduced the depth of the stage to a narrow band close to the footlights and placed the actors against flat decorative scenery, aiming thereby to dematerialize the stage and to merge the action of the play in the sway of emotions felt by the audience. . . . The flat background close to the footlights and the grouping of the actors in a line tended to destroy the materialistic appearance of objects and transformed the stage into a world of visionary images. . . . Facing it in the darkened hall of the theatre was the audience, which could see but little around itself to provide a realistic contrast and so confine the spiritual images to a fixed location in the building. . . . The stage and the audience became blended in the visionary world."¹²

Another exponent of the new method is Max Reinhardt. Reinhardt began as a naturalist under the tutelage of Otto Brahm, but he early saw that the soul of a drama, particularly of a romantic drama, could best be illuminated by symbolic scenery. One of his early successes was *Pelléas and Mélisande*, a production upon which he was congratulated by Maeterlinck himself.¹³ He also produced Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* in the suggestive manner. Mr. William Archer says of this production:—

"Almost all the scenes in Sicily were played in perfectly simple yet impressive decoration—a mere suggestion, without any disturbing detail, of a lofty hall in the palace of

¹¹ Cheney, Sheldon: *The Art Theatre*.

¹² Bakshy, Alexander: *The Path of the Modern Russian Stage, and Other Essays*.

¹³ Carter, Huntley: *The Theatre of Max Reinhardt*.

Leontes. For the pastoral act in Bohemia, on the other hand, a delightful scene was designed, for all the world like a page from a child's picture-book. The grass was bright green velvet, spangled with conventional flowers. A blooming fruit-tree shadowed a toy cottage; and in the background some quaint masts and pennons showed the proximity of the sea. The whole effect was charmingly fantastic and admirably in keeping with the action of the scene."

The symbols expressed the childlike wonder which Reinhardt conceived to be the prevailing tone of the play.

On a larger scale and still more symbolic was *The Miracle*, produced by Reinhardt in London. It was a symbolic pageant, in elaborate pantomime, of the story told in Maeterlinck's *Sister Beatrice*. The story and its symbolic effect are thus described by Huntley Carter:—

"Sister Beatrice is a young nun who is wooed and after a struggle won by a prince. As soon as she leaves the convent the figure of the Virgin is reincarnated and takes the erring nun's place. The action of the Virgin is regarded by the other nuns as a miracle and it is believed she has come to life in order to confer high spiritual distinction on Sister Beatrice. A period of years elapses, and Beatrice returns to the convent, having tasted the bitters of a worldly experience. Abandoned by the prince, she passes through vicissitude after vicissitude, until, with health, beauty, and purity gone, she seeks her old sanctuary. Upon her return, the Virgin, having completed her task, resumes her former position. Beatrice confesses her sins to the nuns, who, however, still believe her holy and worship her as she dies. In this scenario is the element of mystery which great drama demands, as well as that of silence, which is one of the requirements of great dramatic pantomime. It is, in a word, a cosmic theme, the importance of which words cannot adequately convey. We enter the action and pass in silence through a process of disillusionment or enlightenment. We are under cloistral restraint. We are suddenly offered a vision of the world and its temptations. We yield to temptation and go forth to indulge the physical side of us at the expense of the spiritual. We pass from disillusionment to disillusionment till Hell is reached, and finally, we return to the spiritual fold to exchange the impurity of our recent experience for a purity to which it should inevitably lead. . . . *The Miracle* ends differ-

ently from that of *Sister Beatrice*. Beatrice dies, while the Nun, after passing the night in the darkened cathedral, rises from before the Image and passes through the great doors to toll the Matins. Her renewed spiritual life is symbolized by the rising of the sun which greets her."¹⁴

Gordon Craig is even more radical than Reinhardt. So far as I know, he has produced none of the plays mentioned in this article, but he is our most radical advocate of symbolic as opposed to naturalistic stage production. What he says about designs for *Macbeth* is typical of his theories:—

"First and foremost comes the *scene*. . . . The question is not how to create some distracting scenery, but rather how to create a place which harmonizes with the thoughts of the poet.

"Come now, we take *Macbeth*. In what kind of place is that play laid? How does it look, first of all to our mind's eye, secondly, to our eye?

"I see two things. I see a lofty and steep rock, and I see the moist cloud which envelops the head of this rock. That is to say, a place for fierce and warlike men to inhabit, a place for phantoms to nest in. Ultimately this moisture will destroy the rock; ultimately these spirits will destroy the men. . . . Place there the rock, let it mount up high. . . . Do not be afraid to let the lines go high; they cannot go high enough. . . .

"Let your rock possess but half the width of the stage, let it be the side of a cliff round which many paths twist, and let these paths mingle in one flat space, taking up half or perhaps three quarters of the stage. You have room enough there for all your men and women. Now then, open your stage and all other parts. Let there be void below as well as above, and in this void let your mist fall and fade; and from that bring the figures which you have fashioned and which are to stand for the spirits."¹⁵

In Craig's famous production of *Hamlet* at the Moscow Art Theatre in 1912, ordinary scenery was entirely dispensed with; the play was produced before screens variously adjusted and

¹⁴Carter, Huntley: *The Theatre of Max Reinhardt*.

¹⁵Craig, Edward Gordon: *On the Art of the Theatre*.

played upon by various colored lights. The correspondent of the London *Times* wrote of this production:—

“Mr. Craig has the singular power of carrying the spiritual significance of words and dramatic situations beyond the actor to the scene in which he moves. By the simplest means he is able, in some mysterious way, to evoke almost any sensation of time or space, the scenes even in themselves suggesting variations of human emotions.

“Take for example the Queen's chamber in the castle of Elsinore. Like all the other scenes, it is simply an arrangement of the screens already mentioned. There is nothing which definitely represents a castle, still less the locality or period; and yet no one would hesitate as to its significance—and why? Because it is the spiritual symbol of such a room. A symbol, moreover, whose form is wholly dependent upon the action which it surrounds.”¹⁶

Clearly the new drama is very inadequately defined as “the imitation of persons engaged in acting.” For better or for worse, the symbolists are modifying our definitions. They are trying to enlarge the domain of the theatre by “penetrating deeper and deeper into human consciousness and placing moral problems on a higher pedestal”,¹⁷ shifting the emphasis from external action to the psychological and moral processes which underlie action and which cannot always find expression in action. Says Maeterlinck: “The mysterious chant of the Infinite, the ominous silence of the soul and of God, the murmur of eternity on the horizon, the destiny of fatality that we are conscious of within us, though by what tokens none can tell—do not all these underlie *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*? And would it not be possible, by some interchange of rôles, to bring them nearer to us and send the actors farther off?” Maeterlinck believes that the old themes of tragedy are played out, that external action in drama is passing away, and that the drama of the future will be a “static drama”. He says:—

“I have come to believe that an old man seated in his arm chair, waiting quietly beside his lamp, listening un-

¹⁶ Cheney, Sheldon: *The Art Theatre*.

¹⁷ Maeterlinck, Maurice: *The Double Garden*.

consciously to all the eternal laws that reign about his house, interpreting, without comprehending, the silence of doors and windows and the faint voice of light, submitting with slightly bowed head to the presence of his soul and of destiny, without suspecting that all the powers of this world are taking part and keeping watch in the room like so many attentive servants, not knowing that the very sun supports above the abyss the little table on which he leans, and that there is not a star in the heavens nor a force within the soul that is indifferent to the movement of an eyelid that drops or a thought that rises—I have come to believe that this motionless old man really lives a deeper, more human, and more universal life than the lover who strangles his mistress, the captain who wins a victory, or the husband who avenges his honor." "

Undoubtedly the symbolic drama loses much in human characterization, dramatic action, and realistic stage-settings. Just as certainly, also, its tendency to penetrate more deeply into the human consciousness, to emphasize the psychological and moral processes, to bring into the theatre the effects of mystery and mysticism, has enlarged enormously the scope of dramatic art.

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"Maeterlinck, Maurice: *The Treasure of the Humble*.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE POWER OF A GOD, AND OTHER ONE-ACT PLAYS. By Thacher Howland Guild, with Sketches of His Life and Work. Urbana, Illinois: The University of Illinois Press. 1919. Pp. 151.

Mr. Guild, whose untimely death at the age of thirty-five occurred on July 21, 1914, was educated at Brown University, and afterward became a member of the department of English at the University of Illinois. The present volume contains the text of four of his plays, and appreciations of his character and of the spirit of his work by Prof. George P. Baker, of Harvard University, under whom Mr. Guild studied dramatic construction; Prof. Thomas Crosby, Jr., of Brown University, and Prof. Stuart P. Sherman, of the University of Illinois; and Mr. F. W. K. Drury, of the University of Illinois Library.

Mr. Guild wrote sixteen plays in all, extending from one to three acts in length, one of them being a translation (*A New Drama*) with Prof. J. D. Fitz-Gerald from the Spanish of Tamar-y-Baus. Of the others, five remain unpublished. The four selected for inclusion in the present volume had not previously appeared in print, although all of them had been produced,—three by the Players Club of the University of Illinois, and one by the Harvard Dramatic Club. This last—*The Higher Good*—is easily the best of the four. The others are entitled, respectively, *The Class of '56*, *The Power of a God*, and *The Portrait*.

The author of these plays had led an active, alert life; was deeply interested in the dramatic idea and in the art of the theatre; was discerning and discriminating in the analyses of character based upon daily contacts; and possessed an unusually attractive personality. Despite his energy and fidelity to his programme, however, it cannot be said that his work manifests any quality of achieved greatness. In general, keen as is his sense for situations and sincere as is his feeling for humanity, it is apparent that he has not thought deeply and painfully enough to escape from amateurishness of both content and style. His work, too, is over-hasty, and he is too easily satisfied with approximations rather than realities of tone and 'moment'. In *The*

Portrait, a romantic one-act Morality, there is an infelicitous admixture of the mediæval and the modern, a weakness at times in scansion, and a textual reminiscence of *King Lear* (I-i-99) that nothing in the situation or atmosphere would seem to justify.

The Power of a God shows dramatic instinct misdirected, even perverted, because of the writer's dissatisfaction with Augustus Thomas's treatment of hypnotism in *The Witching Hour*, a dissatisfaction which we share. The melodramatic atmosphere and plot of *The Power of a God* quite fail to convince the reader that they participate in the stuff of life itself. We must evaluate this, and the realistic-idyllic, thinly plotted *The Class of '56* as ineffective work: the one is as unpleasantly hectic as the other is anæmic, despite its injected boisterousness.

The Higher Good, however, is well conceived and capably fashioned, developing, with a good deal of originality and zest, a situation of unusual emotional value, against a background at once sordid and spiritual,—the Bridge Mission in the New York slums. There is a trinity of conflicts here, interacting one on another. (1) Governor John Broadleigh, of the state of New York, finds his long degraded but now lately converted brother Joe in the Mission, which the Governor is visiting for purposes half human, half political. Shall he recognize and accept his brother publicly, in the face of his impending candidacy for the Presidency? Thus the Governor *versus* the Governor. (2) The Governor and Joe engage in a stirring dialogue, wherein each reveals certain facets in the truth of his character. (3) The Governor listens to and tries to combat the views of Gustafson, his advisory secretary, and Captain Bannon, his bodyguard, as representing his political hopes and ambitions. The *dénouement*, after the protagonist's severe introspective struggle, proves satisfying. The characterizations are skilful, although occasionally too obvious, and the plot-charting is soundly done.

This play illustrates the real if immature dramatic power of Mr. Guild, whose early death appears to have cut off a writer, judged by his best moment, as Emerson requires us to judge, of considerable promise.

G. H. C.

A CRY OUT OF THE DARK. By Henry Bailey Stevens. Boston, Mass.: The Four Seas Company. 1919. Pp. 88.

This volume contains three one-act plays, all three motivated by a strong aversion to the idea of war. Although the author as a dramatist is justified in foreshortening his pictures and somewhat distorting his character-reactions, yet he is less justified in doing so as an expositor of the pacific philosophy. The artist-interpreter of war, as the reviewer has tried to show elsewhere, will not quarrel about professional or political attitudes toward war. He will see war now as a great and gallant adventure, now as an inevitable molecular movement, now as the abomination of desolation, now as the noun corresponding to the adjective dynamic, now as an inalienable condition of existence, and now as an international Mr. Hyde emerging from a too trustful Dr. Jekyll and 'reeling back into the beast'.

Of Mr. Stevens's deep earnestness there can be no question. He loathes war so utterly that he sees it constantly as a chronic "crowd disease akin to epileptic insanity. Every nation that starts out to fight another with the tremendous claws of its army is criminally insane." And of 'excuses' he declares that none "is big enough to make up for this terrific crime—the impulse that sends an army out to wreak organized, deliberate murder, to lay waste a continent, to kill and kill and kill other groups of men that belong to the same great human family." But "so long as there is hope for the individual, there is hope for the race. We may not see how or whence, but it is there. It is for those who see to bring the nations before the judgment of Intelligent Man." There must follow frankly complete disarmament, and intoxicating liquors, narcotics, harmful drugs, and venereal ills must all be abolished. The patient must be given an adequate chance to free himself from the hereditary taints of the ages, to avoid the periodicity of his insane attacks, and to establish a new, firmly rational habit of life and thought.

These little plays are well wrought in point of dialogue and structure. The first, *The Meddler*, is the most genuinely dramatic of the three. Under the figure of an impending duel between two individuals war is considered and denounced. The Scholar, the Doctor, the Minister—all the responsible privileged classes—

support the necessity of the duel, however anachronistic. When the Meddler—the spirit of Christ—appears, there occur a clash of wills and conflict of actions that result in his imprisonment while the duellists and their friends depart for the scene of action.

Bolo and Babette is a better allegory, but a poorer acting play. It has a good deal of phrasal beauty, and its suggestions touching the Pasture where a certain group of children live (beyond the valley of the world of children at large) and the footprints of the Grown-up Person (any true idealist, not merely an inherited or even elected Chief) that lead into the sheer mountains, from peak to possible peak, for ever, are pointed and stimulating. The chief weaknesses here are (1) the use of more characters than can be skilfully handled within so brief a compass; and (2) the touch of complacency in the conception of the Pasture, a complacency that is, curiously enough, implicitly rebuked by the author himself in *The Madhouse* when he speaks of that "exaggerated self-esteem which in an individual would be insufferable conceit."

In the third play—*The Madhouse*—we have an expository dramatized tract, with only a very slight tinge of action, but with war in the background as an enveloping action contrasting with the peaceful quiet of the asylum. The chief persons are Dr. Jovier, who professionally analyzes the madness of war ("So far as I can see," says the Soldier, who has pursued his enemy into the grounds and has slain him there, "for all your scientific lingo, when you come right down to the point, you're nothing but a new-fangled preacher."), and Jeanson, a thoughtful visitor. The strength and the weakness of the purely pacific position exhibit themselves here more plainly than in the preceding plays. Its strength lies in its insistence on the *irrationality* of military and naval war, its weakness in its failure to recognize the existence of natural forces that condition this irrationality, and that require identification of the perhaps humanly ineradicable war *idea*, and its diversion into clearly wholesome activities,—activities not repugnant to the even more fundamental idea of love.

This group of plays may be usefully compared with Hermann Hagedorn's *Makers of Madness*, Israel Zangwill's *The War God*, and Katrina Trask's *In the Vanguard*.

G. H. C.

THE OLD MADHOUSE. By William De Morgan. New York: Henry Holt. 1919. Pp. 567.

In his "Apology in Confidence" attached to *A Likely Story*, De Morgan chaffs his readers a little about our fictional categories, and has his say about his so-called 'Early Victorianism'. For his part, the present reviewer does not regret his escape from contact with much of the smart, metallic, flippant fiction of the day whenever he yields himself to the charm of De Morgan. It is an escape from the third- or fourth-rate, insincere and ephemeral, to the sterling, the urbane, the gently humorous ("Humour," thought the late Churton Collins, "is the smile on Wisdom's lips") — to the excellent matter of a serene, tolerant, kindly companion, who did not begin to write until he had suffered, and learned, and grown, and achieved "the philosophic mind."

The chief lines of De Morgan's literary ancestry are to be traced, we think, to both Dickens and Meredith, perhaps even more definitely to the latter than to the former. Certainly, there is a good deal of the influence of Dickens to be discovered at times in De Morgan's earlier style, but somewhat less as the novels grew (compare *Alice-for-Short* with *When Ghost Meets Ghost*). The Meredithian quality in De Morgan's spirit, however, was actively at work throughout his life as an author, although we are not aware that he read Meredith extensively. The authors to whom he refers most frequently in his novels, either directly or indirectly, are Browning and his wife, Tennyson, Dickens, Thackeray, Shakespeare and Spenser.

Nancy Fraser ("Elbows") in the present novel is as likeable a girl as Lossie, Alice-for-Short, or Sally Nightingale. She is straightforward, sympathetic and wholesomely fresh, and we are delighted that she marries at last her 'fellow-townsmen,' Charley Snaith. Of his first tragic marriage with Lucy Hinchcliffe; of her destructive lure for Fred Carteret, Charley's best friend, who breaks his engagement with Cintra Fraser for her sake ("the story is sorry for Fred"); of the old, unhappy, far-off love of Fred's father's brother for Mrs. Carteret, a finely delineated mother-woman; of the mysterious disappearance of that brother, Doctor Drury Carteret, in the early chapters of the novel, and his

equally mysterious return at the end; and of the final solution of the mystery (supplied in a last chapter by Mrs. De Morgan, who was in the secret, after her husband's death), the story tells through thirty-four chapters in its own quietly thoughtful, companionable way. It is a story extraordinarily rich in character analyses, humor, and rememberable *obiter dicta*. On the structural side, the plot is unusually well charted, the exciting force, the successive turning-points, the prophetic incidents, the chief crisis, and the cross-correspondences being handled with conscientious skill. If any other than unimportant weaknesses are observable, probably these arise in some seven or eight instances from the desire of the author to furnish adequate signposts during the evolution of a psychologically complicated plot, but in these instances the signposts appear inartistically superfluous. "A story", says the writer, "may be at a loss to account for the thoughts and actions of its characters, and its safest line may be simply to *tell* them, and leave its reader to analyse and understand them as best he may. But some stories have a certain fussiness of their own, that will be always probing for motives and impulses, for the sources of ideas that seem to spring from nowhere, and the blindness to others—gross as mountains, open, palpable,—in eyes most deeply concerned to see them."

We cannot, perhaps, better conclude this notice of a really great novel than by giving the reader a few slight tastes of its felicitous descriptive powers:—

" . . . a pallid gentleman who looked as if he had been shut flat between boards, and been ill set up by a miracle which had not done itself justice."

"Mr. Munby Moring was a thin, grey short-sighted man whose collars held his chin up."

"Mr. Trymer was a gentleman who had earned a reputation of great profundity for his opinions, by never expressing any."

"That young woman was bony and knucklesome, and one of her eyes had an appearance of having been taken out and put back recently, so that she had scarcely had time to get used to it."

"Any satisfactory reason for silence, on any subject, was welcome to him."

G. H. C.

SELECTED POEMS. By Walter Malone. Louisville: John P. Morton and Company. 1919. Pp. xxvii, 307.

The present volume, the last of a series of ten volumes from the pen of the lamented Walter Malone, brings together nearly two hundred short poems, of which some twenty-five are now printed for the first time. The volume is thus in a very true sense a collective edition; for although in 1904 the poet had endeavored to collect the best of what he had written up to that time, the present edition contains not only the bulk of the earlier volume, but also most of the poet's work of subsequent years. Parts of his epic poem, *Hernando de Soto*, are also reprinted here.

Among the poems now first published, the most striking are "The Lights of the City," "Had Lincoln Lived," and "In Praise of Righteous War." Interesting also are "The Dying Tree" and "The Dried-up Stream" (reminiscences of the poet's childhood) and "To a Mocking-bird". The new poems, though less varied in theme and less intense than some of Malone's earlier work, exhibit, nevertheless, much the same traits as have distinguished his work in general,—an abiding interest in nature, especially in the nature of the South; a large sympathy for humanity, and especially for the criminal and the unfortunate; magnanimity toward a victorious foe; exceptional versatility; and unflinching courage and good cheer. Considering his large output, moreover, it is remarkable that the poet should have maintained so high a standard of workmanship.

The volume is attractively printed and handsomely bound. By way of preface, the essay of Professor Frazer Hood on Malone's life and work is reprinted from the *Methodist Quarterly Review*, and this is supplemented by a series of five interesting portraits showing the poet at the ages of six, sixteen, twenty, thirty, and forty. Altogether, this edition should gratify the admirers of Malone, and, by making readily accessible the best of his verse, should go far toward winning for him a more general recognition.

K. C.

JOHN BROWN, SOLDIER OF FORTUNE: A CRITIQUE. By Hill Peebles Wilson. Boston: The Cornhill Company. 1918. Pp. 450.

The truth is hard to get at concerning John Brown. The raid on Virginia, which made him appear as a devil to the South,

the battle-hymn which enshrined him as a saint in the veneration of the North, the legend which immediately grew up around his personality, have all been factors in causing men to prejudge John Brown; and when the popular mind is made up on a subject or a man, it is hard to unsettle it. Moreover, no well-known historian, properly equipped for the task, has as yet undertaken a life of John Brown. Mr. Oswald Villard's biography will probably rank highest, not only as a literary production, but also as constituting the most complete body of evidence that we possess concerning John Brown's career. But no biographer of Brown, not even Mr. Villard, nor yet Mr. Wilson, whose book lies before us, has succeeded in placing himself squarely and exclusively on the ground of pure history. It is a commonplace to say of the historian that he must have no cause to plead, but must content himself with setting forth the facts and the evidence. If this makes history dry, at any rate it preserves the historian from the common mistake of the untrained writer, namely, the confusion of matter of opinion with matter of fact.

In dealing with John Brown it is particularly important to distinguish facts from opinion. His friends and foes alike would doubtless agree that his place in history will depend on his character, not on his deeds. For instance, both panegyrists and enemies have always agreed that no incident in John Brown's life became him so well as the leaving of it. Yet, as a newspaper remarked at the time: "Pirates have died as resolutely as martyrs. . . . If the firmness displayed by John Brown proves anything, the composure of a Thug, dying by the cord with which he had strangled so many victims, proves just as much." Throughout John Brown's career, then, his character is always the main issue. But, if by common consent his character appears greatest at his death, during his life the crucial test of Brown's moral qualities is afforded by his conduct at Pottawatomie. Indeed, Mr. Villard, himself a believer in Brown's moral greatness, concedes this much: "As one views", he writes, "Brown's conduct in the killing of the five pro-slavery men at Pottawatomie Creek, depends to a large degree the place which may be assigned to him in history." (Villard, p. 148). Exactly so. And the weakest point about Mr. Villard's book is that, after honestly

setting forth the gruesome facts of the Pottawatomie murders, and ascribing the guilt to Brown as, at any rate, the instigator and abettor of them, he (Villard) should undertake the impossible task of reconciling the murderer with the moral hero.

And now for Mr. Wilson's work. If we have spoken at length of Villard's book it is because Mr. Wilson has set himself the task of refuting it throughout. Of Villard he says: "He has written into the history of our country a concept of the character of John Brown which is incongruous with the actions and circumstances of Brown's life. He has created a semi-supernatural person—a 'complex character'—embodying the virtues of the 'Hebrew prophets' and 'Cromwellian Roundheads' with the depraved instincts and practices of thieves and murderers. He presents a man who, for righteous purposes, 'violated the statute and moral laws'; whose conduct was vile, but whose aims were pure; whose actions were brutal and criminal, but whose motives were unselfish." (Wilson, p. 19). Mr. Wilson's book has been summed up by Professor Spring, a previous reviewer, as follows: "He contends that the John Brown who 'lives' in poetry, in song, in human hearts, is a fiction for which the hard, disillusioning facts afford no justification. These troublesome facts, as he finds them, are that John Brown's pre-Kansas business career was discreditable; that the story of his early hostility to slavery will not bear investigation; that he went to Kansas in 1855 mainly to retrieve his broken financial fortunes; that in the desperate winter of 1855-'56, no other available source of relief appearing, he abandoned the Free State cause and entered upon a career of outlawry; that a 'brutal desire to get possession of their horses' led him to kill five men on the Pottawatomie Saturday night, May 24, 1856, and that the attack on Harper's Ferry was not simply a raid or foray, but a deliberate attempt to inaugurate a servile war."

Such is the thesis maintained in Mr. Wilson's book. He has written it in vigorous and aggressive style, and it is a useful corrective to Villard's book. But Mr. Wilson falls into the same errors that he so vigorously censures in his predecessors in the field: his feelings are so deeply enlisted that he is prone to twist the facts to fit his contentions. Nor does he introduce any

new or vital evidence to support his conclusions. A true estimate of John Brown's character has yet to be written, but we believe that Mr. Wilson has approached nearest the truth.

S. L. WARE.

DANGER SIGNALS FOR TEACHERS. By A. E. Winship, LL.D., editor of the (Boston) *Journal of Education*. Chicago: Forbes and Co. 1919. Pp. xi, 204.

THE HEALTH OF THE TEACHER. By William Estabrook Chancellor, author of *Our Schools*, etc. Chicago: Forbes and Co. 1919. Pp. xiii, 307.

In his ripe and genial anecdotage, Doctor Winship, the undaunted pedagogical-journalistic veteran, shows us in this his latest book the most approved methods of kindergarten presentation of the 'dangers' that beset the educational train—and things and 'folks' in general. Each chapter is a spoonful of nutritious and more or less translucent jelly, with a sugar-coated pill of up-to-date warning nicely imbedded in it. "If in these *Danger Signals* we state anything in such a way as to irritate or annoy any teacher we shall regret it most deeply." So says the Preface. Let us hope, on the contrary, that the good Doctor's wise and stimulating words *will* 'annoy and irritate' some of the teachers, the sort that needs flaying. Perhaps Doctor Winship can rest content with the saying, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you," if he 'hurts the feelings' of the professional politician-pedagogue, for instance.

In spite of, if not on account of, the gossipy nature of this little book, it ought to be stimulating and informative to the young teacher of the rural districts, and to some others besides. Doctor Winship is always both journalist and teacher, who helps to link together two eras. Whatever one may think of his tremendous reliance on the text that suggests the advisability of being "all things to all men", he cannot refuse to Doctor Winship the virtues of vitality, alertness, sympathy and common-sense. In matters educational as well as in things human, Doctor Winship's heart is in the right place. Nor must we forget that the right place is in the middle of the road, with a strong beat toward the 'left'—and surely the heart has a right to be a *little* 'red.' Perhaps Doctor Winship would agree with us that some of the

educational innovators are unwittingly doing ultra 'red' work, in their forgetfulness of the 'old' values, and their premature insistence on vocational and 'practical' education.

We must not put aside Doctor Winship's quickening little book without mentioning a few of his chapter (paragraph, rather) headings: Dig In; Don't Nag; Don't Boss; Don't Putter; The Awkward Squad; The Sympathetic, Buoyant Accompanist; Gravitation of Human Nature; The Community Trail; Education as Preparedness; Education Must Be Achievement; Democracy of the Universe; Don't Be Educationally Superstitious; Get Out of a Treadmill; Thinking in Three Dimensions; Teachers Win the Battles.

Doctor Chancellor has given us a book of great practical value. He divides it into two parts: I. Principles of Diagnosis, and Cases; II. The Rationale of Health Control. The first part contains twenty-one explicit 'cases', most of them of nervous origin. Strange to say, he seems to say nothing of Freud, or of the vigorous work of the psychopathologists of to-day. Yet instances of pathological 'repression' among teachers are far from infrequent, and some mention of them would have rendered the book more valuable and timely. Perhaps Doctor Chancellor regards psychopathology, and especially Freud, as too technical for the general reader. Nevertheless, the popular journals deal with the recent developments in the study and cure of the 'psychoneuroses', and we cannot but regret that the book takes no account of them.

We shall touch upon several features of the book in order to show its practical value and suggestiveness, and, secondarily, to intimate some of its limitations.

On page 162 are given some useful hints with regard to avocations and hobbies. "Do anything except grind all day every day from year's end to year's end, lest life or mind end sadly and suddenly." Good advice, this, for many teachers and others; but it is by no means true that the habitual grind will cause life to end either suddenly or sadly. This generalized statement, however, is worth listening to: "Have a vocation, an avocation, and at least one hobby. Be several different persons within the law" (presumably including the moral laws and the laws of normal nerve-action).

The two cases of "sexual aberration" on pages 120 ff. hardly prove their point. The young women mentioned probably suffered disaster more from lack of intuition or instinct than from deficiency of information with regard to sex. Much of this 'sex information' propaganda is futile, when not actively pernicious. Well-brought-up boys and girls are often distinctly better off when let alone with regard to the impartation of facts concerning sex. It is easy to excite morbid curiosity without really protecting the young person. Medical students are supposed to be well informed as to the facts of sex and the dangers of venereal disease; nevertheless, there is scarcely a reputable class in society that has a worse reputation in these matters. Whether this statement be verifiable or not, it comes from medical students and their teachers.

The pages on tea and coffee (67 ff.) are very much to the point in these piping days of prohibition. We may mention incidentally that the author gives an admirable recipe for making 'clean' tea.

The dangers of taking warm baths are duly set forth on page 187. The bath of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit has the right of way, when limited to a few minutes, and many persons have learned that extremely cold baths are dangerous to those of weak vitality—perhaps to some who are thought to be strong enough to take them.

It seems unfortunate that a good book should be marred by such sensationally trashy statements as this: "The average normal young woman thinks 150 thoughts a minute" (compare page 207). Even granting that this is intelligible, and admitting that images are thoughts, half-baked assertions such as this can but cause grief to the judicious.

"Every good general physician relies for general diagnosis upon these few signs, *viz.*: (1) Tongue and throat; (2) Pulse and blood pressure; (3) Evacuations. In nine office calls in ten, these tell the physician all that he needs to know; and in three house calls out of four, they tell him why the patient is unable to visit his office." Such summary statements are misleading, however true. Temperature and the 'facies' or look of the patient ought to be taken into consideration—for the former can be exactly ascertained, and the latter often serves to give

knowledge of the general condition of vitality, especially with regard to the nervous system. Besides this, many a patient has suffered from the flimsy examination of busy physicians who are content to let routine take the place of keenness of observation and due study of a case. The best physicians are never the slaves of routine procedure and cocksure diagnosis. The men of mere routine could often learn something from the "Christian Science" that they despise.

The chapter on Care of the Teeth is one of the best. These steps of 'method' might well be posted over the toothbrush: "(1) Brushing the teeth, (2) Brushing the gums, (3) Gargling the throat, and (4) Drinking a glass of cold [not icy] water" (p. 218).

The chapter on Care of the Hair is not often to be found in books of this scope. Especially would we call attention to what the author has to say about massaging the scalp.

Last of all, we feel justified in applying Doctor Chancellor's warning to his own book: "Cut-and-dried rules will not suffice." (p. 299).

T. P. BAILEY.

THE PEOPLE'S BOOK OF WORSHIP: A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER. By John Wallace Suter and Charles Morris Addison. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1919. Pp. 76.

THE KINGDOM OF THE LOVERS OF GOD. By Jan Ruysbroeck. Translated from the Latin by T. Arnold Hyde, with an Introduction. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 1919. Pp. xvi, 216.

The little book, very tastefully arranged, on the Book of Common Prayer, has chapters on The Meaning of Worship, The Book Itself, The Fundamental Principles (Growth and Comprehension), The Three Working Principles (Interpretation, Rubrication, Liturgism), Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer, The Litany, The Holy Communion, The Spirit of the Book and Its Use.

The style of the book is calm and catholic, clear and simple, and the authors have a due regard for forms of worship other than the explicitly liturgical. The worship in silence is especially recognized—this could hardly be otherwise in view of the fact that Doctor Addison, a popular and spiritual lecturer on Mysticism, is one of the writers of this useful compilation.

The last paragraph of the book is especially worth quoting at this time: "Unity is the watchword of our day and generation. Whether it be unity between classes or races [of course by *unity* is not meant *fusion*], unity industrial or social, the unity between nations which is to insure a new and better world, or the unity of the Church, which seizes the imagination and fires the zeal, it is for unity that the religious labor most earnestly, it is the vision of the coming Kingdom that most insistently inspires the enthusiasm of Christian worshippers. It is because our *People's Book of Worship* is so great a medium for the realizing of unity, so truly a handbook of the Kingdom of God and of his Christ, that the lovers and users of it must hold it as a sacred trust, and so deeply feel their responsibility that their use of it, and their whole-hearted participation in its services, will render it the efficient and compelling instrument it may well be in the great cause of universal Christian fellowship."

Due account is taken of the main lines wherein the revision of the Book of Common Prayer is proceeding.

The translator speaks of Ruysbroeck as "incomparably the greatest of all Christian mystics"; but this is a merely individual judgment that will not be shared by many a mystic, and will scarcely be understood by much of the reading public. Nevertheless, it is a good thing to have this translation of a mystical classic, in spite of the bewildering fancifulness of the author's mediævalism. A good sample of Ruysbroeck's pious imagination will be sufficient to indicate the style and content of the book. Speaking of the "gifts of glorified bodies", he gives the following items based upon the life of Jesus as interpreted by a mediæval mystic: "Clearness in His Transfiguration; Impassibility when He transformed Himself into food the night before He suffered, with intense desire and exultation, and without any anguish, which nevertheless is to be understood in accordance with His action, not in accordance with His condition; Subtilty in being born without any pain of an untroubled Virgin; Agility in walking upon the sea."

In spite of Ruysbroeck's tragic miraculism, many a modern mystic can view the real miracle as being the essential power of

mind over matter, spirit over flesh, without traversing St. Augustine's great insight that God does not contravene His own laws, the laws of nature. Modern mysticism cleaves to the supernatural rather than the preternatural, contranatural or unnatural.

T. P. BAILEY.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY FROM AN ESCHATOLOGICAL TO A SOCIALIZED MOVEMENT. By Lyford Patterson Edwards, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Sociology in St. Stephen's College. Menasha, Wisconsin: The Collegiate Press. 1919. Pp. 945.

Doctor Edwards, in these few pages, has given us a most timely, instructive and original treatment of a very important question in early Church history. It is rather surprising, however, that a "Collegiate Press" should put forth a pamphlet in which forty-eight or more typographical errors and misspellings occur in the course of its ninety-four pages.

But the treatise itself is well done. A good general idea of its contents may be gained from the titles of its five chapters: Political Theories of the Early Christians; The Early Church and Property Concepts; The Early Church and the Populace; Chiliasm and Patriotism; Chiliasm and Social Theory. The third chapter gives an illuminating psychological and sociological study of the persecutions, and the fifth, a very interesting application of the latest sociological principles to the conditions of the Early Church. We have space for only a few of his conclusions, but these will indicate the suggestive value of the whole treatment: "Had Christianity, in the beginning, found a considerable proportion of its adherents among the laboring classes in the rural regions, there can be little doubt that it would have maintained the purity of its early doctrines for a much more considerable period of time than was actually the case. There is no doubt that, in that event, Chiliastic expectations would have survived in Christian theology longer than they did." "The aim of this thesis is to uphold the contention that the forces now operating in society to shape and reshape beliefs and opinions are the very same in kind as operated in the society of the Roman Empire. In short, any explanation of early Christian Chiliasm which seeks to bring in the operation of any social

principles which cannot be shown to be objectively operative in contemporary society, is to be viewed with a certain measure of doubt if not of suspicion."

We have one correction to suggest: On pages 9 and 42, the author has inadvertently confused Clement and Origen in the matter of canonization, and their dates are not given correctly. Clement of Alexandria was venerated as a saint down to the seventeenth century, and his name was in the martyrologies, with his feast on the fourth of December. But on the revision of the Roman martyrology by Clement VIII, about 1600, the name of Clement was dropped from the Calendar, by the advice, it was said, of Cardinal Baronius. This action was confirmed by Benedict XIV in the middle of the next century, for the assigned reasons that so little was known of his life, and that he had never obtained public cultus in the Church. Origen was formally condemned in several councils, notably at Constantinople in 544, and was never canonized save in the hearts of all sincere and earnest Christian scholars.

CHARLES L. WELLS.